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GOD'S BLESSED MAN

PAUL RADER



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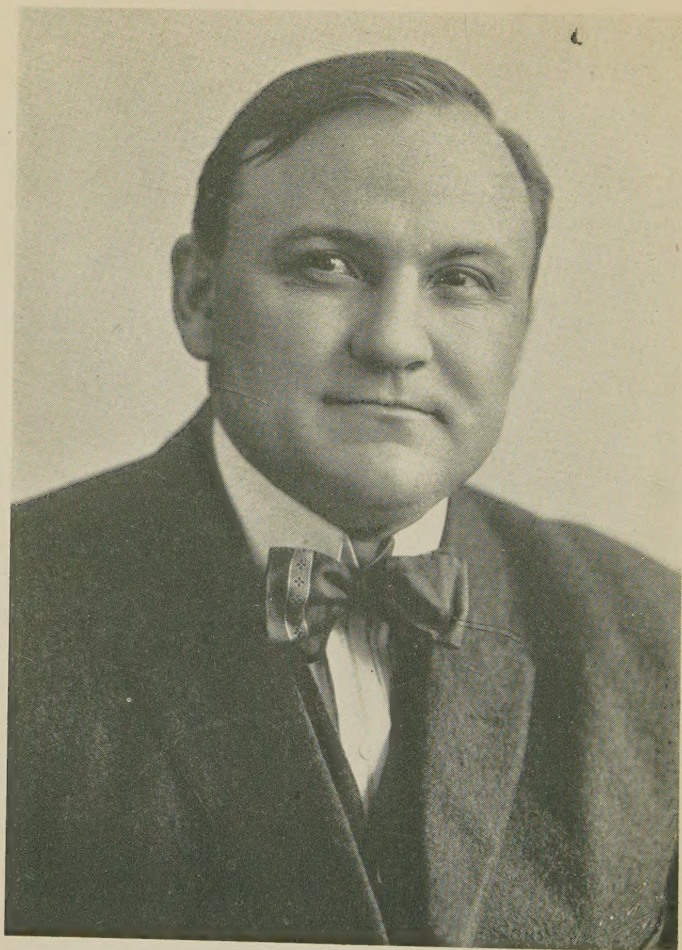


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Paul Pader

GOD'S BLESSED MAN

Soul Stirring Sermons

BY

PAUL RADER

PRESIDENT OF THE CHRISTIAN, AND
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FOREWORD

Every man wants to be a success. Never have I met a man who did not want to be a success, even if it was only a successful loafer. God is desirous of making every Christian into a success; namely, *God's Blessed Man*.

This collection of sermons has been gathered out from among many of my sermons, then carefully compiled and edited by my dear friend, Dr. J. Gregory Mantle, to answer the question to-day on thousands of Christian tongues, "How can I become a successful Christian; how can I become *God's Blessed Man*?"

The successful Christian life is a walking, breathing super-life, a life lived under heaven's favor; therefore the title: *God's Blessed Man*.

In the following paragraph out of one of these sermons called "The Man Who Walked on the Water," I have epitomized the successful life of the Christian who has found the life that makes *God's Blessed Man*.

"Oh, wait before Him until the fire falls. Your *given-up self* is but a wick *dropped into Himself*, the oil. You are in Him and He is in you and He will let the fire fall to make of you a flame for Himself and others. If you are a wholly *given-up* wick, He will light you, but remember it is the burning oil of His holy presence which alone gives the light. Learn to rest quietly in Him and He will tend the flame."

Moses stepped aside to see the miracle of a burning bush. The world will stop to see *God's Blessed Man* on fire from above.

I pray that on many a man the fire may fall as he reads these sermons.

P. R.

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GOD'S BLESSED MAN

GOD'S BLESSED MAN

I

THE MAN ON FIRE

"And He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire."—*Matthew 3:11.*

When thinking of man's problems, remember that you will never comprehend them unless you start with the fact that man has sinned by taking his own way and refusing to obey the commands of God. By his independence man broke off the relations between himself and God. The curse that followed this broken relation, left man to shift for himself. Before this relation of father and child was broken, all provision for man's welfare was made by God. Man needed no clothing, for God somehow supplied him. His fall left him unclothed, in a cold world, to shift for himself. This shifting for himself many men have chosen to call evolution. We grant that he had to learn to shift for himself, and that in doing so he has come from the simple to the complex in civilization; but that this shifting went on previous to his sin the Bible denies. He was cared for by God until sin came. We know that in every step, from the simple to the complex, since the Fall, man's progress in civilization

has been marked by fire and its uses. Tell us how any tribe uses fire, and we can tell their state of civilization. It has to do with clothing, food, housing, invention, transportation, education and manufacture.

This strange thing called fire has made great changes in the conditions under which men live. Fire is a mystery. Its laws can be told, but why the phenomena attending it exist, man does not know. One might define a flame as "gas temporarily luminous because of chemical action," but this would have to be qualified greatly, for it could easily be contradicted. There are flames which are not luminous. The *why* of heat attending fire is also a mystery, even though its amount may be measured. Yet this mysterious phenomenon, called fire, plays a great part in the life of man. It seems strange at the first hearing, to promise *fire* with the Holy Spirit. One would think enough had been said when it was stated: "He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit." Then why fire also?

We speak of fire as combustion. We mean that one substance is uniting with another in chemical action, and that when this is going on there is heat and light attending the action. When the Holy Spirit was uniting with believers on the day of Pentecost, the symbol of this uniting, used by God, was the symbol of fire which sat in two-tongued flames on each of the men and women in the Upper Room.

There was to be a new life for these believers of power and service for God. It was not to be the life of the Holy Spirit alone, nor of the individual alone, but a combined life. When two gases are united we have fire and its phenomena. Now God is showing

by the fire symbol that when the Holy Spirit unites with the believer there is to be an attending spiritual phenomenon symbolized by fire, which is light and heat. Therefore it is not only the coming of the Holy Spirit, but fire also.

This spiritual phenomenon represented by fire is what the world will see and sense, and they will say "a combustion has taken place." The one hundred and twenty, who were baptized with the Holy Spirit, immediately began to manifest their fire. Their hearts were warm, then hot, and then all aglow with the reality of the combination. Their hearts and tongues were loosed to tell out the wonderful things of God, so that every one around heard them talking about the marvelous things that God had done. It was a living, human, and Divine flame, sparkling and crackling with the hot love-tidings of God's interest in a lost world. Oh, what a lack of this hot love there is to-day! Oh, for a baptism of fire!

There is a great deal of man-made enthusiasm. This is good so far as it goes, but it is only painted fire, and nothing like the real thing. Man has worked hard to produce this fire, but it is not produced by works but by yielding.

Man can produce fire by friction, by flint, or by refraction of the sun's rays. I think I have seen, in my boyhood, as many as a dozen different methods for making fire used by the Indians. The favorite method with me was the bent stick about two feet long, with its end poked into a small dent, and the dent smeared with some good pitch. Then the other end was put into a dent in a board, and the board held

against the breast. The bent stick was then turned very fast, as you would turn the handle of an auger, until the fire was produced by friction. I have seen people trying just that hard to produce this heavenly fire, and puzzling their brains to invent some new way of creating enthusiasm and religious success. Many churches are revolving very fast in the small dent they have made in their community. They have lots of enthusiasm, or false fire, but not the fire of the Holy Spirit. The fire of which I speak comes only from a wholly yielded life.

Just watch the Master as the people crowd about Him! He heals, He comforts, He looses men from demons. He is always giving, giving, giving Himself. He is God. "All things were made for Him, and by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." Yet with this truth about Him in your mind, see Him there, naked, like a slave, washing the disciples' feet. No man could have taken His life from Him; yet because of our sins He is there on the Cross of Calvary, giving a spotless life in payment for our sins' penalty. He is giving Himself. He arose to give us life. He now sits at the right hand of God, with that wonderul body which came out of the grave, and is praying and working for us. He is still *giving* for us! This was not enough, He determined that we should have Him with us to work for us, and in us and through us. He is to furnish the dynamic of our activities; to be our Provider and Comforter. So He sends the Holy Spirit to abide with us, and to be *in* us.

But this blessed Spirit cannot operate within us

until our will is utterly yielded to Him. So, like two gases, when we reach the place of yieldingness; when we are willing to say: "Not I but Christ; I want only His will"; the Holy Spirit, in a new way, in His fullness, combines with us, and the glow of a holy fire springs up within the heart.

A cold heart is an unyielded heart. We are speaking within the language of truth when we talk about ice-box churches. I have been in them. I have caught the temperature of unyieldedness over the 'phone, some twenty degrees below zero. I have also been in hot churches, preaching to a crowd of wholly-yielded hearts, and, oh, the delightful heat! What can be worse for the world than to come up against a cold Christian? It is worse than a cold pancake. Who wants to eat one of those? Think of having to see a stack of them, or in other words, a pew or a churchful. It is enough to give a man chills and fever. But, oh, those lovely, hot-heated ones, with butter and honey all over their souls! They make the world hungry to know Jesus, smacking their lips with joy and satisfaction in His presence. Who can describe the glow of the heavenly fire in these utterly-yielded hearts? Every church ought to be a fireplace; a cheerful fire-spot.

The center of activity in Rome was the fire-spot in the temple to Vesta. When that fire went out all business in Rome stopped, for they believed that the relations between earth and heaven had been broken. Oh, that every soul, out of whose life the holy fire has disappeared, might believe the same thing! Stop all your business. Shut yourself up in your room.

Yield, oh, yield once more to the blessed Holy Spirit, and rest not until once again you know what it is to be filled with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

The Greeks sent fire from their center with all the new colonizers that went forth from them. That is the only possible way to colonize the world for Christ. The greatest need of the home churches to-day, and also of those on the far-flung battle line in distant lands, is more fire. Who can describe the power of a hot heart? That is the only way the Early Church colonized. They were having a bonfire of blessing one day at Antioch; they were having a great prayer-meeting; Barnabas, and Simeon, Lucius, Manaen, and Saul were there. "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said: Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." So they went forth by the Holy Spirit. That is God's way to colonize. O for more prayed-out, fire-carrying workers.

Fire has been very prominent in all God's dealings with men, and is yet to be more prominent. The Bible is very plain in its teaching of condemning and consuming sin with fire; and this is real fire. Sodom and Gomorrah perished with actual fire from the Lord. There is a consuming fire for sin, for it is written "Our God is a consuming fire." God manifested Himself in the display of fire as a symbol of Himself, and in this way He showed His approval of men. He appeared to Moses in a burning bush. How beautiful this looks to us as we turn back to it from what we know of God to-day. He is fire to us, lighting and warming, but not consuming, unless we persist in sin,

for Jesus went through the consuming fire for our sakes.

For the first two hundred years after Christ the Christians refused to use light in their worship of God. Just see how the religions that have a false fire use candles and other lights in their church services in our day. One of the old saints wrote this in the early centuries: "They kindle lights as to One who is in darkness. Can he be sane who offers lamps and candles to the 'Father of Lights'?" God's presence in the temple was designated by the Shekinah, a glorious light within the Holy of Holies. Above the Tabernacle God's presence rested every night in a pillar of fire.

We shall all have to stand the fire-test. Every man's work shall be tested by God's fire. "The fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is. If any man's work abide . . . he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire." What a day to look forward to when every man's work shall be revealed by fire! If your service is the outcome of an entirely yielded heart; if the holy fire burns as the result of your union with Him; your works will abide in that Day; they will be "gold, and silver, and costly stones." But that which is tainted with pride, self-will, and self-ambition, will disappear as "wood, and hay, and stubble," as the flames of God's fire touch it. He asks us a grave question in these days. "Who may abide the day of His coming? And who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire."

"Refining fire, go through my heart,
Illuminate my soul;
Scatter Thy life through every part,
And sanctify the whole.

"O that it now from heaven might fall,
And all my dross consume;
Come, Holy Ghost, for Thee I call,
Spirit of Burning, come!"

II

THE BLESSED MAN

First of a Series of Sermons on the First Psalm

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful, but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night."—*Psalm 1: 1, 2.*

Here is a wonderful picture with a very dark background. God is a consummate artist. He never paints these wonderful and beautiful pictures without throwing them into relief by a dark background. He paints realities, setting forth facts as they are. He always shows up the lie and paints from the truth. If it is a picture of the Garden of Eden, He pictures Cain as an example of *the lie*. The lie is, that mankind can be saved without the shedding of blood. Against the dark background of Cain, with his natural and murderous heart, He puts the faith of Abel in the slain lamb, that beautiful faith which is *the truth*, the very marrow of the Gospel.

So in this Psalm. He puts the ungodly in the background, and then displays the godly in the foreground of the picture, starting off with the great word "blessed." "Blessed" is a peculiar word, implying something supernatural. That is, there is something about this "blessed" class of reader that is uncanny—

they have a kind of charmed life. You do not know exactly what it is about them that explains their influence upon others; or that gives them their unvarying success. It is not easy to discover the source of their power; they are supernaturally aided.

When, a few years ago, they were making scientific researches concerning spiritism, one of the women who came under investigation seemed able to make extraordinary things happen, and happen with a regularity which could not be explained unless she was aided by somebody else in the room. The investigators could not find this "somebody else" until they discovered that this woman carried a dwarf under her magnificent hoop-skirt. It was he, who in the darkness—and this kind of thing is only possible in the darkness—came out from under the table and did the uncanny things attributed to the spirits. This was one of the many fakes of spiritism. There is a good deal of fake about spiritism, and there is a great deal of the devil about it too, and when you understand that, it is easy enough to know where the medium's power comes from.

The kind of life spoken of in this familiar Psalm is a supernatural life. After all your powers are faded, and everything you can do has been done, there comes in this supernatural life, this life of hidden power. Isaac Watts rightly expressed this great truth when he sang:

"From Thee the ever-flowing spring,
Our souls shall drink a fresh supply;
While such as trust their native strength
Shall melt away, and droop, and die."

Samson was a type of this supernatural life. He was a "shrimp," if you understand what I mean by the language of the street. As far as the man was concerned he was a little fellow with long hair, and men and women could not understand how he could do the work he did.

I have seen pictures of Samson with great muscles, a big nine-footer of a man, with a pair of shoulders like a pair of barn-doors, and great southern-porch columns for arms. Why, there would be no guess about that; if a man nine feet tall, built like an ox, walked away with a gate, people would not have sat around and held a conclave to find out how he did it. It would be easy enough to see; one look at Samson would be quite sufficient. If a man like that stood up with the jaw bone of an ass in his hand, and slew people with it, right and left, it would be easy enough to tell how he could do it, and how he could knock three or four men down at a time.

The puzzle came when they looked at this delicate-looking, long-haired little fellow. They could not understand for the life of them how *he* could do the things he did. They hunted and searched for his secret, the secret of his power, and wondered how he could stand his ground when all those men rushed upon him. Let me tell you there are very few fellows who would rush upon a man nine feet in height, a big burly fellow with the jaw bone of an ass in his hand.

But Samson was a little man, and they would say: "Go in and get that 'shrimp,' what do you care for that jaw bone of an ass?" They would rush in, and

as fast as they did he would knock them down, and they wondered how that little fellow, standing there, could pile up the heaps of slain until they numbered a thousand men. There was something about Samson which they could not understand.

That is what the word "blessed" means. It means a subtle something, a power that you cannot explain by natural laws or from a natural basis. You examine a man who has this "blessed" life from head to foot, and you say: "I don't know where he keeps it. I confess I don't understand it. I have watched him and others like him, but I cannot understand how it is that the things they are connected with always succeed." No, you never will understand until you get their secret.

Finally Samson fell into the lap of Delilah. She thought he had a charm. "Tell me," she said, "wherein thy great strength lieth?" If he had told her he had a rabbit's foot that made him strong, she would have believed it, because every one knew he had a charmed life of some kind. He might have pulled a rabbit's foot out of his pocket, and said: "If you get one like this you will have my power." But he told her worse lies than that. He told her if she took seven little green withs and tied him with them he would be like any other man. Delilah's friends tried it on Samson, and found out that he had not told her the truth. Then he said: "If I were bound with new ropes my strength would be gone," and they readily believed him. They would have believed anything he told them, because they knew he was living a charmed life. They knew that a mysterious power

came upon him to do peculiar things, and that he performed these feats not by his physical muscles, not by any ability which he possessed in the natural, but that some mysterious outside force was doing the work.

It certainly was outside power, and that is where God got His credit. That is just what God is looking for to-day; namely, men and women whom He can bless; men and women who will not trust in the power of men, but in a power that is bigger than anything men can do. God is looking for that kind of people, and the world expects that kind of life in the Christian Church and in the individual Christian. Christians have no right to be like other men; to have the failures and weaknesses of other people, because God is their strength; Jehovah is their resource; and by life, lip and deed they ought to emphasize the fact that they have been with Jesus, and learned of Him; and that the supernatural power of God is working in their lives.

"Blessed" is the man—the blessing of God rests upon him, the Divine unction is his; he is daily anointed with the fresh oil of the Holy Spirit. He is anointed of God for a purpose—to manifest and show God to the world. We have tens of thousands of Christians who manifest none of this life. We have preachers by the thousand who manifest nothing of this life. They have no prevalent prayer-life. They have no power with God or with men. It is not a question of lack of personality. It is not a question of lack of brains. Many of these men are polished and wonderful in their scholarship, yet they possess nothing

in the way of power that comes from God. When you read what they have to say, there is something in it from a man's standpoint; their logic and philosophy are good, and their points are well taken. They are backed up with evidence, and it seems as if they ought to win their case; but there is no case. You wonder why it is? It is because they do not recognize the only qualification for success, this anointing of God, without which "we spend our wretched strength for naught."

I believe in the old-fashioned genuine call to the ministry by the power of the Holy Spirit—men set apart, picked out by God. You can turn men out of colleges, theological schools and universities as fast as you can turn out carpet-tacks, if you want to; and when you have done it you haven't a preacher, nor a teacher, nor a Christian worker. All this culture and education are good in their place, and I have nothing to say against them; but I am pleading for something more. No man who takes his diploma from any college, seminary or theological school ought to think for a moment that because he does that he is fitted for the ministry. He is never really fitted until the oil of the Holy Spirit has been poured upon him, and drenches him from head to foot.

People recognize the fact that God is with certain men and not with others. God is willing to be with anybody who will pay the price. He will pick you out for your work, whatever it may be, the same as He will pick out a preacher for his work. I believe God wants to pick out every officer in the Church as He did when the twelve Apostles called the multitude

of the disciples unto them, and said: "Look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom ye may appoint over the business."

What we need to-day in the Church of Jesus Christ is to clean out the folks that are not Christians, and get down to those who have been born again, and filled with the Holy Spirit. If you only have a little clean group of men and women after that order, God can build on that kind of a foundation a superstructure that will be to the praise of His Glory throughout the eternal ages.

The world is looking for mixers, but the Lord Jesus Christ is looking for separators. The world thinks if a man is a good mixer he will come out fine; but if you will look over the records you will find that God's men always come out clean. Though they stood alone with God they were not exclusive or hard to deal with. John the Baptist wasn't a "Stiff" at all. He didn't have to take his plug hat off to speak to you. He was a common ordinary man, but believe me, he stood with God and with God alone. The world thinks there is great power in mixing, but there is not. There is power, however, in a life separated unto God, and freshly anointed with the Holy Spirit.

What kind of a man does God bless? Here, in this first Psalm, are three negative qualities, and one positive. Here is clearly shown how you can live this Blessed Life with the smile and favor of the Holy Spirit upon you.

Ask yourself this question, "Could God afford to

bless me? Can He bless the things I am doing; the kind of life I am living? With the personal ambitions that I have, and the selfish motives that so often actuate me; could God afford to come upon me and put His Capital behind me?"

Here is a young business man who comes to the Bank and says, "Will you loan me five thousand dollars?" What does the Bank say? The Bank says, "Let us look at your business; let us know the way you run your business?" When they have done that they say, "We cannot lend you a cent." You ask "Why?" "Because you would only lose this five thousand dollars; it would run away like water in a rat hole—your business is not set up right."

Can God afford to bless your life? Whenever you are willing to trim up as God wants you to trim, *you cannot escape from the blessing that God wants to give* for He is in the blessing business, always looking for some one He can bless.

You do not *have* to spend a night in prayer seeking the blessing of God. He is willing to bless you immediately, but you had better spend the night in prayer checking up your life, and letting God tell you what it is in your life that is wrong, saying, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way Everlasting." O for old-fashioned conviction to come upon people showing up the things they are doing, taking away the blindness from their eyes, and letting them have such a vision of their own carnality, their own fleshly life, as would show them how they could not but outrage the Holy Spirit,

if ever He came upon them in His fullness, while in that unsanctified condition. The fact is God is such a jealous God that He could not afford to bless them, for such men would rob Him of the Glory which He will never give to another.

“Search me, O God, search me and know my heart;
Try me and prove me in the hidden part;
Cleanse me and make me Holy as Thou art,
And lead me in the way everlasting.

“Give me the heart that naught can change nor chill,
The love that loves unchanged through good or ill;
The joy that through all trials triumphs still,
And lead me in the way everlasting.

“Oh, let my work abide the testing day,
That shall consume the stubble and the hay;
Oh, build my house upon the rock, I pray,
And lead me in the way everlasting.”

III

THE BLESSED MAN'S COMPANY

Second of a Series of Sermons on the First Psalm

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful."—*Verse 1.*

The Psalm goes on to describe the "blessed" man's company. *First of all he "walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly."* Preaching from the pulpit and platform has been colored; Sunday School teaching has been colored; the publication of books and Sunday School literature has been colored; the simple, pure, real Gospel of Jesus Christ has been colored and made useless, and worse than useless, by following the advice and counsel of the worldly crowd, "the ungodly."

Persistent efforts have been made, and are still being made, to make the preaching fit that gang. Men try to please "the ungodly," but my Book says, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly." As soon as you make up your mind that you are going to live the life where you do not walk in the "counsel of the ungodly," you will have a "blessed," a charmed life.

In one of our meetings a beautiful woman was converted. She ran well for two or three weeks, and then she said, "Mr. Rader, I am having some trouble,

will you pray for me? My husband does not want me to go the way I have chosen." I said, of course, that is quite natural, but you must look at it from his side, and you cannot expect him to see what you see. You must have no criticism in your heart, nothing but love and loyalty to him. You will have to stand, in sweetness and patience, where God can bless you. Just stand where He tells you to stand and He will back you up and bring it out all right. Don't get discouraged or impatient, but show your husband that you have Christ, in His power, dwelling in your heart, and he will soon see it."

After she got up from her knees I said: "It seems to me that you are a little bit wobbly in your spirit; are you going to trust God to do the whole business?" She thought she was, but you could feel that she wasn't. Finally the crisis came. She didn't want to go to the picture show, and had bravely stood out for Jesus; but one night her husband said: "There is a dandy show on; a good, clean show, and I am going to take the boy, and if you don't want to go along, all right, but I think a woman ought to go with her husband when he asks her."

Both her mother and his mother were living with them, and they told her a thing or two, until finally she said, "I'll go with you." In a few minutes she was dressed and walked out on the street with her husband and boy. He walked away from the town, and she said: "You are not walking toward the picture show." "I don't want to go to the picture show," he said. "What did you come out for?" she asked. "Good God!" he cried out. "The sun has gone out

and every hope I ever had. I thought there was something in this Jesus business, and I just put you to the test to see whether there was anything in it, and whether you had something worth while. If you had stuck to-night, Fanny, I should have come through. I was wondering how long you would keep up your religion. I thought you had a real Jesus!"

Discouraged? Of course she was, and utterly disgusted with herself. It drove her back to God as it should have done. But, oh, what a blessed result would have followed, if she had only stuck fast, and not walked "in the counsel of the ungodly!"

The life is "blessed" that *stands*. The very person you think the most unlikely is watching you, and will take Christ as a personal Saviour if you will only stand firm. Are you being grilled of God, and put through the fire? You had better stand. The world sees Christians wobble and wiggle and says: "They are all hypocrites!" Our business, as God's "blessed" ones, is to be absolutely true to God, and to pay no attention to their criticisms. If you walk in "the counsel of the ungodly" or in your own counsel—for it is just the same—your own natural inclination will be sure to bring you into trouble.

But you say, "Isn't there a place for us to be self-reliant?" Before the Holy Spirit comes to possess us in His fullness we thought we had some sense, but when He comes we find that we haven't any. When He took control of me, I found that I had no sense, but I found that I had a Shepherd who had a plan, a program and a purpose, and that He was working out things after the counsel of His own will, and that

I was entering into works "which He had before ordained that I should walk in them."

God never made us to be self-reliant. He intended us to be the most dependent creatures in the world; but our first parents listened to the Devil's lie, and wanted to be as gods, and show how big they were with their independence of God. The "blessed" man is the man in whose life the power of that independent spirit has been utterly broken; and who no longer walks in the counsel of the "ungodly," whether it is his own counsel, or that of others.

You say again, "Mr. Rader, do you mean that a man can't rely on his own resources?" No, he cannot do it alone. Paul—that man of such wonderful natural resources—said, he was with the Corinthians "in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling, that their faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." For a strong man like Paul to go down under the hand of God gives Him more glory than for God to use such a strong man's talents. Men glorify God when they see the high go down, and become willing, like Jesus, to wash the feet of others; becoming for Christ's sake, the least of all, and the servants of all.

We have educated men to-day round the idea of thinking what *they* could do. We have polished them so much that they have forgotten Jesus, and their dependence on the Holy Spirit. They have not learned that the all-important thing is to get into the place of the "blessed" man, who is no longer self-reliant, but a man upon whom all the powers of heaven come down and work through his life.

Do you ask, "How can I get into that place?" You are not to follow "the counsel of the ungodly." That is plain enough, and I hope God will put it, like an electric sign, in your brain. Whom does God mean by the "ungodly"? He means the class of people, whether they call themselves "Christians" or by any other name, who depend upon their own natural powers and knowledge, instead of looking to God. The "ungodly" depend upon themselves; but the godly man says, "We will talk to God about it." That makes the ungodly man so mad that he says, "Oh, I hate these praying folks!" But you say, "Are you not going to do anything"? Not unless God tells me to do it, and then I will do it. Sure, I will do my part, but not until I get orders from headquarters.

Is the bent, the pull of your heart to be a blessed man, a man like Jesus, and to know Him in His fullness and power? If the bent of your life is the other way, you are still "ungodly" and need a real change of heart.

The next thing about the company of the "blessed" man is that he "standeth not in the way of sinners."

There are a great many folks who are Christians, and, if I were to say to them: "If I were you I wouldn't do that," they would expostulate: "Well, Mr. Rader, I haven't committed any sin, I don't mean anything wrong by it."

Yes, that is right, but you are "standing in the way of sinners." You are there in the very place where sinners stand. You know a toboggan slide has a place where you can put your toboggan, and sit on it just before you slide. Then you pull yourself

over to the slippery place, and down you go. There is a toboggan sitting-place in life, and there are a lot of people who are trying to live a Christian life right there. They haven't gone into actual sin, but they stay perilously near it. They are in a dangerous place, and it will not be long before they slip over.

A Quaker was looking for a coachman, and when a man came to apply for the position he asked: "How close couldst thou drive to a precipice without going over?" He said, "I could drive within six inches of it and not go over." He was dismissed. Another applicant came, and in answer to the same question said, "I could drive within an inch and a half of it." He was not engaged. Another came, and when the question was put to him he replied, "I wouldn't go anywhere near it." "Thou art the man I want," said the Quaker.

Stay in the road where you belong, and keep away from the precipice. How far can you go into the world's stuff and still be a Christian? You cannot be a "blessed" Christian at all if you even stand in the way of sinners. It may not be sin to you yet, but you are always in a slippery place, if you stand where non-Christians stand.

The theater is the world's church. The stuff the theater provides is the stuff the ungodly eat and live on. That is the sinner's place, and if you stand there you can never know the "blessed," the Spirit-filled life. It does not matter who you are. I defy you to prove that you are living a life under the anointing of the Holy Spirit if you stand where sinners stand.

When a Christian stands in a compromising place

it will not be long before he slips into sin. I once met a young fellow who was preparing for the ministry. I was in his little church preaching for him. At the close of the service a nice-looking woman came up, shook hands with him and looked up into his face. He held her hand too long to please me. When we got out into the open I brought the thing up, and he said, "Why, Mr. Rader, I never thought of anything like that," I said, "Listen, Bud, I am an older man than you are, and if you don't want to slip into sin, and lose your place in the ministry, cut that hand-holding business out now." He said, "Oh, I never meant a thing!" "Don't try to bluff me," I replied. "I know what you are doing." "But," he persisted, "I am as clean as can be from any thoughts of sin." "Sure," I said, "but say, boy, you have grease on your skids, and it will not be long before you slip." He is out now, gone. He slipped right into the sin I warned him of through "standing in the way of sinners."

Do not be asking, "How close can I come to sin and still be a Christian?" We have so much of that in our day. Why not say, "Oh, God, how deep can I come into Thee; how far can I hide in the heart of God, and in the power of the Holy Spirit?"

Paul was digging his way in every minute, and he said: "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and do count them but dung that I may win Christ and be found in Him. . . . That I may know Him, and the power of His Resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death." He

was digging in to see how far he could get. If you are only hungry to know God He can bless you, but not when you are standing in the way of sinners.

The third thing about the "blessed" man's company is that he "sitteth not in the seat of the scornful."

What is wrong with you when you sit in a spiritual meeting with a sneer, saying, "Oh, I guess that is so, but—?" You have no "Amen," you never boost, in the spiritual sense. If some one else starts something colored with the world-spirit, you are up and coming; then you are fine; but when it is really spiritual you have the corner of your lip curled, "sitting in the seat of the scornful."

A man came to Pittsburg when I was there, who had lost his voice. He was a preacher and knew I believed in Divine Healing. I did not shove the truth down the throats of others, but I had my hand in the honey-jar and I wouldn't pull it out for anybody. This preacher knew this, and he said: "Rader, there is no way for me to get back my voice unless God gives it to me. I have been to Florida and California, and the mountains, and I cannot get it back. Will you pray for me?" I said, "Sure I will, come over to the meeting on Thursday." He came over and sat on the back seat, and some people came into the service I had never seen before. They were a noisy crowd, and during the meeting they started their "Hallelujahs," and I had a kind of noisy spell myself. I shout when I please, if I have something to shout about. I notice the Republicans and Democrats do; and the fans shout themselves hoarse at a baseball game. I am a Chris-

tian, and therefore have a right to shout when I feel like it.

We were singing about some delightful things, then we had a testimony meeting and were celebrating. It really was delightful, and there was nothing wrong with it, but I saw that poor man was nervous. He was twisting from side to side, wondering when this part of the meeting was going to be over and something else would come. I didn't even get to the sermon, before he reached for his hat, and then his coat, and made for the door. He had never been in a "manufacturing plant" before in his life and he was scared. He had lived in an "ice-house" all his days, and did not know that when you are forging metals you always have sparks flying around.

Before he got out into the street he did his best not to get in the front of anybody and obstruct their view and he made his get-away fine. I called him up later, because I was sure that he would not call me up, and I said: "Say, you made your get-away the prettiest I ever saw in my life." "Well," he replied, "I happened to think of something—" I said, "Oh, don't put a lie on the top of it, you didn't like that bunch with their 'Hallelujahs,' did you?" "Well," he said, "I guess I had better say that I didn't." "All right," I answered; "that's good and honest, and we can fellowship, and I shall be glad to pray for you, but I tell you, brother, things were *done* after you left, men and women got through with God and did business with Him." Do you know what that man's trouble was? He was "sitting in the seat of the scornful."

Some time afterwards I sat in the same tabernacle, and after leading the singing, the minister put up a man on the platform to talk. He was the sissiest-looking man I ever saw. He talked so lovely, and had the dearest little mannerisms, and put his hands together so ladylike; I wondered he didn't have his silk dress and ear-rings on.

I sat back there with my lip curled, sitting in the seat of the scornful, thinking what a sissy he was, when the Holy Spirit said to me, "If *you* were preaching you would expect some one to be praying, not criticising." God talked to me so plainly about sitting in the seat of the scornful that I went down to the basement, to the coal-bin, and prayed God to take that ugly, scornful thing out of my heart, and put prayer there instead. God met me in confession and blessed my heart, and I came up without noticing the coal-black on my hands. The minister said, "Will you come up, Brother Rader, and lead us in singing the hymn?" I came up and had to use my black hands, and then I had to tell the people why they were black.

When the service was over, and the young man I had been so severely criticising went home with us, I learned that he had been a missionary in China for many years, and had come home broken down in nerves. When he got through telling us how Jesus had worked with him, a lady said: "Do you know, Mr. Rader, he is the most wonderful orator we had in China. Did you notice his little womanish ways? Well, they are not really woman's ways, but he has lived so long with the Chinese, and has so got into

their manners that he talks exactly like them. He had a queue and wore Chinese dress, and when he preached, the Chinese would say, "He is a Chinaman!" and others would say, "No, he isn't!" and if a vote had been taken, the majority of them would have said, "He is a Chinaman!" He had become Chinese for the sake of the Chinese, and for Jesus' sake. There I sat with one corner of my mouth curled, and criticised a man who had given away his very life and vitality; who had poured it out for Jesus, far away from home-comforts and home-ties.

God cannot bless critics. Criticism kills the presence of the Holy Spirit and ruins the blessing in your heart. I have never yet seen a person sitting in the seat of the scornful that got any blessing. God will take all that criticism from you if you will let Him. He will take away the pride, the temper, the conceit, and all else that fosters the critical spirit, and enable you to throw yourself into the meeting, and pull by prayer instead of hindering by criticism; then the Holy Spirit will come and melt your heart; and you will know how "blessed" they are that "sit not in the seat of the scornful."

IV

THE DELIGHTED MAN

Third of a Series of Sermons on the First Psalm

"But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth he meditate day and night."—*Verse 2.*

We have spent most of our time, thus far, in looking at the negative side of the "blessed" life—at the three things a person ought *not* to do, if he wants to live a successful Christian life. By successful, I mean a life that God approves, a life that shows itself by its outflow, a life that from God's standpoint is a success.

There is such a thing as being a successful, a really victorious Christian. There is a place in Jesus Christ where life takes on victory, and this place ought to be known by all Christians. God brings us to a crisis hour, after showing us that we cannot possibly live in ourselves, that the life of victory is not in our flesh, not in the realm of all our efforts, and that all we can do is to have faith in the ability of Jesus to live His life in us.

In this Psalm we are told about this life of victory; a life that is in the Holy Spirit, not in any degree in ourselves, but entirely in Him. The devil's trick is to get us to look at ourselves, to estimate our own resources, to persuade us, if possible, that there is some-

thing we can of ourselves achieve by education, or refinement or will-power.

God knows the human heart in all its depths, and He has no confidence in it whatever. He took all that we were in Adam, and hung it on the Cross in the person of His Son; He counted it accursed, and put it out of commission there. He has not a bit of confidence in us, and if we have any confidence in ourselves, that is the reason why we have not victory in Him.

As long as men have an idea that they can live this life of themselves, they struggle, seeking to cultivate, and in a hundred ways to work things up until they make themselves satisfactory to God. But that is impossible; they are always under condemnation, constantly defeated, and they never know the meaning of victory or joy.

We are having to-day a lot of rotten preachment, pulpit teaching and magazine stuff, to the effect that men have a Divine spark in them; that they are almost ready for heaven, and that if the Lord will only put a little bit of something on their shoulders, they will sprout wings and be ready for glory. But God says that we are lost, absolutely undone, and that the human heart is the most deceitful thing in all the world.

Every man who is honest admits this, but many try to cover it up and camouflage it, but God alone knows what is underneath. If there had been any way to have things fixed up through setting a pattern for us, or by our working our own way, there would have been no need of Jesus Christ's dying at all. All God would have had to do would have been to have given

us His law, and to have said: "This is the way I want you to live, and you *can* live that way; now *do* it." But God knows it cannot be done, for "the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be"; and God does not expect you to do the impossible thing, or to live a Christian life by your own ability or power.

When people say, "But I *will* live this life, I *will* pattern after Jesus," they can no more do it than a hog can pattern after a human being and live a life like a man. You must make up your mind that you cannot of yourself live this "blessed" life, and there isn't anything in you that can live it. There is only one Being that can live it, and that is Jesus. He can completely transform you, put His own life into you, and so live a life of victory in your life; but remember it is *His* life and not yours that is victorious.

It is no wonder that the Gospel seems to have lost its power, when men keep preaching another Gospel; and fooling men about their goodness and greatness, until the real Gospel has lost its essence. Jesus came as an absolute Substitute for my poor lost life, and gave Himself for me. It is not my business to attempt to *pattern* after Him. It *is* my business to let Him work out in my life His own pattern by His own power. Paul describes this life in the familiar words, "Christ in you the hope of glory."

Some people, when they get on a street-car, want to cluck and urge it along, for they have driven horses and held the lines so long that they think they have to drive. All you have to do in this life of victory is to settle down in Jesus and He will do the running of

things. God wants to show you that in His Son the fare is paid, and all you have to do is to keep still, shut your mouth and let Him do the work. Only give God a fully yielded will and a life of absolute obedience and trust, and He will do the work. He knows the very moment when you thus yield. Disgusted with your own ways of failure you become at length delighted with Him and His ways.

Now that is the "delight" of which the Psalm speaks when it says "his delight is in the law of the Lord." Naturally, nobody's delight is in the Word of God. There isn't a natural heart in the world that loves to read the Bible, except as wonderful literature. Until the Holy Spirit has wrought in you the work I have described you will never "delight in the law of the Lord."

If some one sent you a book about automobiles, describing the parts and the working of the engine, I wonder how many women would be delighted to sit down and read such a book. If an automobile had just been presented to a woman by her husband, she might be interested in looking at the picture of the differential, or something about the gears, but she would not be *delighted* in it. But take a man in the automobile business, manufacturing them, in competition with others, and he is just delighted to get hold of that book. How eagerly he studies something new that has been put out, and reads of new parts that he wants to know about, for he thinks he can invent something himself after understanding two or three little things. He is delighted. Why? Because he is in the business.

Now until you get into this business you will never be delighted with that technical magazine called the Bible. There is nothing in it that is at all delightful for the average person to pick up and read. I challenge you to open this Book anywhere and sit down and read it to a sinner, and say, "I want to give you some pleasure, so I thought I would read you a chapter out of the Bible." He would say, "Good night! Let me go. I don't want anything out of that Book." There is nothing there that delights him.

If a man were visiting me and I should say, "I am a pharmacist, and here is a little dissertation on the mixing of drugs; let me read it to you, you will enjoy it so much." My visitor would say, "No, let me get out. I'll take the drugs, but don't read that stuff to me, I'd rather take any drugs than listen to that." That is a technical book, and only those in the business can enjoy it. It is easy enough to know when you are in the Jesus business, for it says that when you are, your "delight" will be "in the law of the Lord, and in His law you will meditate day and night."

Are you in the Jesus business? You think you are, but haven't you been bluffing yourself and camouflaging a good deal in your life about this Book? Now answer God, and do not fool with the question, "Is this Book a delight to you? Now tell the truth; you *know* it is not a delight." O yes, you read it from duty. My! How many people do things from duty! They say, "Well, I ought to go to the prayer-meeting." But it is not a delight. That "ought-to" business is the worst conception of Christianity. People say, "You ought to do so and so. You ought to do this!"

Most of us are living a duty life as far as Christianity is concerned—few are delighted with the Word of God; few people who are “tickled to death” about all sorts of things are “tickled to death” with Jesus. We get no delight out of Him. We do out of other things. You say, “I want to sit up close to the fire and enjoy my book. Of course I want to be saved, I ought to be; it is a duty,” and they lose all the love and joy, the victory and the sweet communion that there is in Jesus Christ just because of this “duty” business. It is *not* a delight to them to read the Word of God, and there is not anything about them naturally that can call it a delight.

They do not get into it, they do not enjoy it, they would not sit up for hours and read this Book as they read other books. You do not find them burning midnight oil to hunt up something they know is there. The fact is they are not in the business, and it is an absolute and positive proof that the hour is not yet come in their life when they have been brought to the end of themselves and are absolutely yielded to God.

This is God's own means of proof. He says that this man who is the “blessed” man, is delighted in the law of the Lord. If you cannot pass that standard it is time you got into some definite place with God. When it is said, “his delight is in the law of the Lord,” it is positive proof that his life is so given up to God, that he so desires to do His will, and to understand the technical things written here about walking in the Holy Spirit, that he has his nose in the Book, working at it all the time.

Whenever a man becomes a specialist with the Lord,

he becomes interested in this Book. I heard an Italian musician play one day, and I never heard any one play as he did in my life. His trousers were ragged, his shoes run down, and he sadly needed a hair-cut, but he just tucked that little violin under his chin, and oh, how he played! He laughed while he played, it was such a delight to him. And how he studied and worked. He lived in a little attic, and would go around the street playing. Men would give him five cents, a dime or a dollar, and as soon as he could get away he went back to his attic and worked away hour after hour. Then when he got enough money he would go to the finest violinist in the city, take a few more lessons, and then return to his attic to practice. He meditated on it day and night. He made it his delight. It wasn't any trouble to him at all, he loved to saw on that old thing and bring out the music within it.

Did you ever get to such a place with the Word of God? Has it ever become such a delight to you? If we ever have churches whose delight is in the Word of God, how they would shake a city by claiming the promises in that Word! Some preachers take a little from Tennyson or Browning or Shakespeare, as their subject. Why? Because the public are interested in Tennyson, Browning and Shakespeare, and not in this Book. We do not expect them to be, because they are not in the business; but we who are in the business ought to love this Book with all our hearts, delighting ourselves in the law of the Lord, learning from the technical parts of it how God works with men, and meditating on it day and night.

V

THE PLANTED MAN

Fourth of a Series of Sermons on the First Psalm

"And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season."

—*Psalm 1:3.*

The trouble with most Christians is that they are not "planted." I like that word "planted." What a number of people there are who are not "planted" at all, they are merely "set out" like the plants in a nursery, or like the flowers in the summer time, that wilt and wither in the first frost of the winter.

They are not like the old oaks and elms in the parks which have stood there for years. On the contrary they are so unstable that when you come around in a year's time you cannot find them, they are backslidden. O for those old oaks, that are so rooted and grounded in the love of God, that those who are in trouble say, "I know where I can get help and comfort!" Here is an old tree that has been "planted," not old because he is gray-headed, but because he is old in the Lord. He may not have been a Christian many years, but he has improved his time, rooting himself in the Word of God, "like a tree planted by the rivers of water." He is not shifting around, "tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine," but he grows stronger and more

steadfast every day. The winds may howl about him, but they only make him strike his roots deeper into God. When trouble comes to him you will find him hunting in the Word of God for another promise. When trouble comes to others he is the one to comfort them "with the comfort wherewith he himself has been comforted of God." He sings:

"Ill that He blesses is my good,
And unblessed good is ill;
And all is right that seems most wrong,
If it be His sweet will."

What satisfaction and joy there is in a "planted" life! Those who are simply "set out" know nothing of it. James says, "a double-minded man is unstable in all his ways"; and the Christian who is not "planted," who is not living in victory, is a double-minded man. That Scripture was never intended for a sinner. A sinner is not double-minded, he is single-minded. He is not bothering about God, he is having his own single way. A Christian is double-minded when, after becoming a Christian, with his heart he wants to serve God, and with his flesh he wants to serve himself. He has a wobble and a wiggle in his life. He is double-minded.

God intended that the Christian should go right on with Him, constantly appropriating what has been purchased for him on Calvary, so that he lives in continual victory. God says that to the man with the single eye everything is single, but the "double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." How many of these double-minded Christians we have in these days!

They are pretty good on Sundays, and then like the little girl with the curl, they are "awfully horrid" through the week. They serve the flesh through the week and sometimes on Sundays besides. It is up and down with them; in and out; sometimes the sun shines, and God is in their lives, and the next day it is all dark, and they are under condemnation. They are "set out" and not "planted" Christians.

If you are born again, you are possessed of the uncreated life of Jesus and all things are yours. Jesus Christ has done the full work on Calvary. When we speak of a crisis hour in the Christian life, we do not mean that Jesus has done anything new that He did not accomplish on Calvary; but that you simply allow Him to do *in* you what He has already done *for* you on the Cross. You just allow Him to make real and dominant in your life that which He Himself has purchased for you. When He purchased the forgiveness of your sins, He purchased also for you the overcoming power that is greater than all the power of the devil. The reason why more people are not converted through our efforts, and that our lives do not multiply more is because of this lack of victory. We allow the flesh to have its way—this abominable, devilish thing, called our "flesh." It does not grow out in a tree, it grows in you—pride grows in the human heart, selfishness grows in the human heart, covetousness grows in the human heart, envy grows in the human heart—these are what Paul calls "the works of the flesh."

This flesh life constantly wars against the uncreated life, the new creation that Jesus Christ has implanted in our hearts. God never intended that our old nature

should be victorious. He intended that the new nature should be entirely dominant. Paul said: "They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; and they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit."

Which are you going to serve? Your answer will decide whether you are going to be a "planted" man, or merely "set out." Are you going, once in a while, to come up in the victory and love of Jesus and walk in the Spirit, and to-morrow turn around and fulfil the desires of the flesh and of the mind? Are you going to walk as the world walks, or are you going to walk so as to please God, and live the "blessed" life that is described in this Psalm?

So many imagine, when we talk about a life of victory, that it is something we ourselves achieve. It is nothing of the kind. God intends that we should get victory from *Him*, but there is no victory in *us* at all. It cannot possibly be worked out by us, and you had better stop talking of what *you* can do. If this victory is not in you, why do you struggle to make yourself what you cannot become? There is no need to struggle. Jesus has had the struggle for you. He fought the battle and won the victory; "and this is the victory that overcometh even our faith."

What are the characteristics of this "planted" life?

The First is Submission.

Without absolute submission to Jesus Christ we shall never know the meaning of the word "planted." Many a Christian looks at this life and says, "I would like to go through and live that life," but to do this you must be willing to give up your own way and your own will. We are soldiers of the Cross and followers

of the Lamb, and if we are merely pretending to be soldiers, living to please ourselves, the world has a perfect right to laugh at us. If Jesus Christ is Lord as well as Saviour, then in God's name let us be Christians and serve Him. He has given some of us a thousand orders and we haven't moved yet! What we need is an old-fashioned revolution and clean-up, so that Jesus Christ can be the "boss" and have the first place in our lives.

What would you think of a company of soldiers, who when the order came to march would say, "I don't feel like going; I think I will go and lie down, I feel so poorly." You will! You will lie down in the guard-room, that's where you will go. They will not stand for that kind of stuff from soldiers. They are supposed to have forgotten themselves and dropped all that business. They are ready to give their lives. When the commander blows his whistle, and it is time to go over the top, unless they are cowards, away they go. But when Jesus calls us to surrender or to service, we say: "I was at a meeting this afternoon, and I thought I ought to go to the altar when the call was made, but I didn't." God pity us! That kind of thing must be a stench in the nostrils of heaven. Christ, Who never asked anything for Himself, but Who went all the way to Calvary, a living and a dying sacrifice for us, asks us to make an absolute surrender, and we sit down at our ease and say, "Well, I don't *feel* like it."

Can't you see it? Oh, see it, and see yourself in such an awful light that you will despise yourself forever! You will never get anywhere with Jesus until you see

that there is no chance at all while you have anything to say about it. There has to be such a complete going down, such an absolute surrender, that when He calls you, midnight, morning or noon, you are "on the job."

The second characteristic is Patient Determination.

The man who wanted to make a little electric machine spent hundreds of dollars on it, but when he got it all fixed up it did not work. Did he quit? No, he read something else, examined something else, looked over his work, and checked up what he had done. He was not going to stop until that electric machine worked. And he never did. Why is it that when you start out, and Jesus has promised to make you a success, to dwell in you and keep you by the power of the Holy Spirit, that you make one experiment, and if it does not work, you quit? Why is it? I have seen people come to a meeting where I have given the invitation, and they have gone into a side room for prayer, and the next day, when they fail, instead of saying: "Lord, I am going to keep on until I find the way into a life of victory, a life filled with Holy Spirit," they quit.

Men will go for years to college, and study night and day to get their diploma; yet when the Lord wants to take us through a course of death, that we may be burned out, and fit for the fullness of the Holy Spirit, how few will pay the price and go through.

We wonder why we are failures, and why there is so little victory or joy in our lives. Why not say: "Lord, I am going through at any price. I will take the death-route, however hard it may seem; and by Thy grace I will never draw back until I know the

fullness of the Holy Spirit." If you will take that stand, it will not be long before you are like a "tree planted by the rivers of water."

The third characteristic of this life is Meditation.

He "delights in the law of the Lord and meditates on it day and night." It is not a case of hop, skip and jump, so far as His study of the Word of God is concerned; he really meditates on it, and allows that Word to sink down deep in his mind. When God gets a man to meditating He is sure to show him, as he can bear it, things in his life that prevent him from being at his best for God, and all he has to do to maintain his fellowship is "to walk in the light."

Many a man, while he is making an experiment, has to work along for two or three years, and he never knows exactly what he is going to do until he stumbles on some contrivance. It was a fool who fixed up the sewing-machine. They had the shaft running up and down, and the needle was a part of this shaft. When the needle broke they had to take the whole machine apart, take out the shaft and put in another shaft. This fool was standing by, a half-witted idiot boy, and he said: "If you will make a little needle and put a groove here, and a screw there, you can shove the needle up in the hole, put the screw on it, and have it all fixed." The fool showed them how to do it; they did it and have been doing it that way ever since. Such victory suggestions come from the Holy Ghost to us as we meditate.

You have gone on with your business and it does not work. Men have tried everything in the human line to live this fixed, this "planted" life, and it does

not work. In God's name why can't you see that it is nothing but a life of obedience, nothing but a life of trusting what Jesus will do that *will* work. Every man that ever did get rid of himself, and dared to say a final "No" and "Good-by" to himself, and a big, everlasting "Yes" to Jesus, has always found that it works. It is the broken lives of men and women that God uses; men and women who have fully given themselves to Him; who are willing to go through with Him at all costs, and who, when the Holy Spirit speaks to them in the season of meditation, no matter how gently, have learned the joy of instant obedience.

Another characteristic of this life is Communion.

Do you know, it is the most delightful thing in the world to be in a company of people filled with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit moves so gently that they catch the least thing that He wants to say. He does not have to knock them down; they catch it in a minute. When you get into a house where the father and mother love each other, did you ever notice how they talk across the table without saying a word? You cannot get on the signals to save your life, but they pass them and something is done. Some of you have done it to your wife, and your wife has done it to you. You can regulate the whole house, and she can tell what she wants you to do for your guest; if his plate is empty you know it is time to fill it up, but she does not say it at all. She has the loveliest little signals, and sometimes the loveliest little criticisms about yourself, and you catch her meaning easily, because you are in love and you understand each other.

When you are filled with the Holy Spirit, and lov-

ing Him, He does not have to knock you down; the world may not know He is talking to you at all, but He will come right in in an instant and shut your mouth. You were going to say something about somebody that was not particularly generous, and He kept you from saying it. Your friends did not hear Him, but you heard Him. If you have transgressed He will say, "Go ahead and ask their forgiveness" and you have to do it. You may think He comes in with a great splash and fireworks, but you will find that He comes as gently as the zephyr and asks you to obey the least thing that He tells you to do. Some of you are waiting for some big thing, but you have to mind the Holy Spirit about the least thing in the world. It is the little things that count.

Here are a man and woman who are in love. Well, bless your heart, they will hunt for ways of pleasing each other. One young fellow that I knew, came to our house wearing a green tie. Everybody told him that he didn't look well in green, and made all kinds of fun of him. He never told them why he wore green, but somebody found out the secret. The girl he was going with loved a green tie. Why, that fellow would have worn a yellow tie if she had liked it. He would have stood on his head for her. Why? Because he loved her. And yellow or green, purple or blue, did not make a bit of difference to him alongside of her love and what she liked. It is the same with Jesus—you will want Him, you will hunger for His presence, you will listen for His voice, you will delight in His law, you will find out what kind of a life He likes, and you will say, "What shall I do, Lord, so as to

please Thee, that Thou mightest be able to bless me and work in my life." You will delight yourself in His law, and in His law you will meditate day and night.

This tree is "planted" by "the rivers of water." Planted where? In the desert? No, by the rivers of water. Now that is a peculiar expression. You would think one river would be enough to be planted by, but this is "*the rivers of water*"—not the river of waters, but "*the rivers of water*." The same expression is used in another place. You remember that Jesus, when He was talking about the Holy Spirit, used the same expression, saying of the man filled with the Holy Spirit, "Out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water." That is the same expression as the one in this Psalm. I once spoke to a colored preacher about the meaning of this. He went away and dreamed. He woke up in the middle of the night saying: "Rivers, rivers, rivers—out of his being shall flow rivers of living water." He said, "Lord, I should think one river would be enough to flow out of a man, but why 'rivers,' Lord?" Then the Scripture seemed to open to him and the words came: "Out of him shall flow 'love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control,' all these rivers." "Hallelujah!" he said. "That is the meaning of rivers of living water."

Some people have one little river flowing through their lives, and it makes so much noise that they think it is a Niagara, but it is not. It is rattly and noisy, and along with it there is a good deal of quarreling and temper and disputing and contention, with no evi-

dence of the sweetness of the Holy Spirit. But God says that this man shall be "like a tree planted by the rivers of water"—with "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control," with all these being sucked up into the roots of his heart.

He is constantly drawing them up; he is rooted and grounded in love; his joy is full; his peace passes all understanding; he has the Holy Spirit abiding in his heart, and these rivers of blessing flow through his heart, and are then drawn up to be expressed in his life.

VI

THE FRUITFUL MAN

Fifth of a Series of Sermons on the First Psalm

“And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season.”

—*Psalm* 1: v. 3.

There can be no such thing as fruitfulness in the Christian life apart from the indwelling, in His fullness, of the Holy Spirit. Fruit is not produced by human effort, it is the spontaneous outflowing of the life of the Holy Spirit in the believer, when once he yields himself to God.

There is a great deal of teaching in our day about the Holy Spirit coming upon men simply for service, as if those who were not going to preach or teach or serve, in any special way, did not need a special anointing of the Holy Spirit. Thank God, on the Day of Pentecost, the whole one hundred and twenty, Peter and the crowd, every one of them, were filled with the Holy Spirit. God intends this experience for every Christian. His plan is that every last man and woman shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, and conscious of His presence, live in the joy of His indwelling, and work under the spell of His power. He promised away back yonder, “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.”

In order to bring forth fruit in your season, you must be under this anointing. You remember how the prophet of old saw the vision of the olive trees near the golden candlestick. There was a light in the candlestick, and a continuous burning, without any one filling the lamps. In the vision these olive trees grew up on either side, and automatically the oil was carried from the olives and dropped into the cups causing the light to flare up. On the top of this vision comes this wonderful promise: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

This beautiful picture of the golden candlestick and the olive trees, goes with the promise, so that we may make no mistake, but understand that there is no struggling nor striving in the Christian life, but the working of God Himself through the Holy Spirit. God wants us to get the truth that this life is, as we have said, the spontaneous outflow of the Holy Spirit, and not by the rattle and clatter of machinery. "The works of the flesh" suggest a factory; "the fruit of the Spirit" suggests a garden.

I fully recognize the power of organization, but you must have life first. There is no need to dress the child before it is born; but you can get shoes for it after it is born. I love to buy shoes for them, but you must have the baby first. Life comes first—Jesus and the fullness of the Holy Spirit first—and then trot the machinery in afterwards. It is mighty easy to get the machinery afterwards, but it is life first. The Holy Spirit even directs how the machinery shall be set up. Jesus says, "I am the Good Shepherd." He goes before His sheep. His sheep hear His voice and follow Him.

It is this led-life that God intends the Church to have. He intends that the Church shall be equipped from heaven, and not from earth, and He purposes to be its equipment; and therefore to be *your* individual equipment. When you are properly equipped, the service follows in natural sequence, and God intends that for the last one of us.

God loves you, and wants to have you filled with Himself *because* He loves you, and He has provided for this intimate relation between you and Himself. He does not want you pulling at your load like a horse pulling a wagon, but He says, "Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me." It is this intimate relation He desires which must be sustained by prayer. If you have not yet found the fullness of the Holy Spirit it is because you have not waited on Him, because you have not gone alone and spent much time with Him.

You have to come to the end of yourself before He can work for you. The verse which we are thinking of speaks of "bringing forth fruit in his season." In the Church's history there have been times when something definite was needed, and something definite is needed to-day. We do not need a Martin Luther in our time, but we need a man filled with the Holy Spirit who will bring forth fruit for that season in which he lives.

If ever there was a time when the preachers in their pulpits, and the people in their pews needed a special anointing of the Holy Spirit, it is to-day. We need something new; we cannot wait very long; we need it right now. The hunger in the hearts of the people is

certainly an indication that such a revival is greatly needed.

When the Holy Spirit comes to fill believers they bring forth fruit in their season. If you look at any special time when God picked a special man for His work, you will find that there were thousands of others just like him. God selected that man as His spokesman although there were others dreaming and praying about the same thing. When God gave His call to Martin Luther, he was not alone; it seemed as if he was alone because he had to be the General of the crowd, but there was a whole multitude who were thinking the same way; and the minute Luther said, "Forward, march!" thousands were ready to throw off the yoke of Catholicism, step out of that awful system, and offer themselves even for death. His was the leading voice, and it was just the season for that kind of move, and Martin Luther, filled with the Holy Spirit, brought forth his fruit in his season. The time had come for some man like the fearless monk to say his say, and to say it loud enough that the people could gather to some kind of standard.

For a time like ours, God has given us this promise: "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." Those of us who have been watching the course of the Church for the last few years, realize that the enemy is coming in like a flood; in a social-service way, in a worldly way, in an amusement way, in a destructive-criticism way. The enemy is coming in like a flood; but Hallelujah! the Spirit of the Lord is going to lift up a standard against him. I believe God is going

to give a reverberating clarion call that will go out, sounding louder and louder, resulting in a new kind of evangelism and a great spiritual revival.

We are to have a real revival; I do not know the kind, but it will be of God. I did not know what my child would look like before it was born, but I knew that it was mine. I know that this revival is being conceived by the Holy Spirit, and something will be born before long, and we ought to get ready. In your own hearts you feel the stirring in the tops of the mulberry trees, and you know the need of it. God says He will pour water on the dry ground. The very fact that the ground is so dry proves that the rain is coming.

Now size yourself up and ask, "Where is the difference between my work and that of the average person who works in a society or in a lodge?" As the world looks at the Church, it looks at it as a kind of lodge; it knows it is enthusiastic about its game, but it does not seem to feel that it is connected with God in any way. But there is all the difference in the world, and God ought to get you under conviction, so that you will find out whether you know anything about the meaning of this verse, "Not by might, nor by power." Not by your might, nor by anybody else's might, not by your power, nor by anybody else's power; "not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit saith the Lord."

But somebody says, "You have to be counted." Oh, forget that! Of course I know you have to be an ax, but, bless your heart, somebody has to swing it. I may be an old ax, but the Holy Spirit has to cut

me loose so that He can swing me. You may have your talents, but they have to be loose. You dare not be stuck on them. *It is not you*, but it is God taking hold of you, and Himself swinging you into the task.

The revival that is coming is going to split and break right on this issue. We are getting sick of all this human clap-trap, and we want to see God work. People are getting sick of anything else, and I want to thank God that I got sick of it long ago and threw it all up. When I can see God work I am happy. It does not make a bit of difference to me now how many things you organize, nor how big you make them. Of course men can make things go, and organize things, but the world wants to know whether it is of God or not, and He plainly says, "It is not by might, nor by power." Paul says: "You see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought the things that are; that no flesh should glory in His presence.

Men are going around lauding certain individuals who have a lot of "pep" and power and influence and money and talent; and then they wonder why the thing does not run, but God selects men on a different basis entirely.

Take your Church for instance. Suppose some young fellow, a splendid young man, full of spiritual

life, and growing in the Holy Spirit, is ushering faithfully up and down the aisles, when you need a new deacon. He sees you pick a man in the pews, who has given no evidence of being saved, for this office. Some one asks, "Is he a Christian?" "I don't know," comes the answer. "I never heard his testimony, but he belongs to the Church, and he is cashier at the bank, therefore we will make him a deacon." What has his cashiership in the bank to do with his being a deacon? You select him in place of that godly young fellow who is walking up and down the aisles, and measuring up to the requirements of a deacon as far as his godly life is concerned. If you select by the money standard, instead of the spiritual, you discourage everybody who is spiritual in your Church. God never told you to pick a man on account of his looks, nor on account of his money. He has set down in His Word the kind of man who ought to be a deacon and run the Church; and instead of taking God's directions we have turned it over to the flesh gang and left the spiritual people out. Our work is not done in a spiritual way, and it is no wonder we have no revival and no spiritual blessing.

It is this thing that has to be taken hold of, and shaken as a dog shakes a rat; and God is coming to shake it in the coming revival. We are going to have a revival where men and women will realize that it is not because of money, nor prestige, nor family, nor blood, nor anything else, but through Jesus Christ, and His Blood, and the power of the Holy Spirit, and through Him alone, that things eternal are to be done. The Church will have to get out of this caste business;

so that as the working men and the poor, pass our churches, they will love the place and not despise it. The man of the street has an idea that we go around a community and select certain kinds of people and put them into a Church. They see them selected, they look at the pews, and they get the idea that Christianity is not for them; and the fellows on the inside often get the same idea, imagining that the Church is a certain kind of a lodge for the educated class; for folks that can dress well, and that can take a position and do the work.

It was not that way in the Apostolic times, and it does not have to be that way now; and thank God, in hundreds of places it is not that way. When a man comes inside the Church he ought to lose all his identity, as far as the world is concerned. He is there as a child of God, and a member of the Body of Jesus Christ, and God does not see anything else about him, his money, his talents or his influence. He is a poor sinner saved by grace, and if he has a million dollars, he ought to sit beside the poorest pauper, and they ought to praise God together, and they will do it if they have the genuine article. Thank God, I have seen it done. I have seen a rich man in my inquiry room lead a "bum" to Jesus. I saw a rich man in St. Louis get out of his Pierce-Arrow car and put his arm around a poor negro, and tell him of Jesus. That kind of thing is the only solution in the world for our problems.

The trouble with the world is that it has never really tried Christianity. There is no trouble when men really get it, for it works like oil. It puts all on the

same level, they give the same testimony, and come out of every walk in life, and say, "Hallelujah! I am an old sinner saved by grace, and cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ." We recognize each other as brethren and do not regard any other distinctions. We need to be so broken and humble before God, that we get beyond these human distinctions. Then God can use us to bring forth fruit in our season.

Moody suddenly saw this truth. Discouraged with his own efforts, he saw, one day, what it was to lean upon God, and he determined to let God have His way with him. I do not need to tell you how God worked through the life of D. L. Moody, but from that day it was God's working and not Moody's, for he had learned to say:

"Once it was my working,
His it hence shall be:
Once I tried to use Him,
Now He uses me."

There is all the difference in the world after you have come to the end of yourself. Just as soon as he came to the end of himself, God filled him with the Holy Spirit and he came back to his work wonderfully anointed and equipped. God sent him around the world to tell the story of His glorious Gospel; but first God had to break his heart and fill him with His love. He was still full of "pep" and "go," but he became as tender as a kitten, and he came with his ministry of love just when the people needed it, at the time of the Civil War.

What I want to show you is how the Holy Spirit

brings a man to have fruit for his season. All over the country people were broken-hearted, and Moody came with his messages of tenderness, with his heart full of Divine compassion, and his eyes bathed with tears. The Holy Spirit worked through him mightily, and he preached the message of the Son of God, a heart-ease message, a tear-drying message for broken hearts and broken homes and broken conditions of Government. He brought forth his fruit in his season, because of the Holy Spirit Who was working in him. It was not "some kind of work," but it was *the* kind of work; it was not *a* work but *the* work. You may be doing *a* work for Jesus, but you are not doing *the* work, unless you are filled with the Holy Spirit.

You say, "*I am working*, but I do not seem to be getting anywhere." Why? Because it is *a* work and not *the* work to which God has called you. Suppose I am working in the kitchen with you, and there are twelve eggs over here, and I say I am working and I go and break the twelve eggs. "But," you say, "I want only two or three of them, and I want them broken here in this bowl, and not in the sink." I was working, wasn't I, breaking eggs? You say to God, "Am I not working?" "Sure," comes the answer, "but you are not making the cake I wanted you to make."

We meet so many Christians doing *a* work who think they are working with the Holy Spirit, and they are working right against Him. My little tot was in the parlor one day when I walked in, and had wool-yarn wrapped around her from head to foot, all mussed up. I said, "What in the world are you

doing?" "Me help Paudy wi' her sweatey," she lisped. I said, "Yes, you have helped Pauline with her sweater! You have pulled half of her work out!" She sat there quite happy, thinking she was helping. I could not punish the baby, for she thought she was working, with her legs crossed and her tongue in her cheek, working hard. Maybe you have your tongue in your cheek, and My! how hard you are working. But you are not working in the plan of the Kingdom. O that we might see the difference, that it is "not by might, nor by power (nor by my ability) : but by My Spirit, saith the Lord." When a man realizes *that*, he will bring forth his fruit in his season. He will break his eggs when God wants them broken, and pull out yarn when God wants it raveled. It may be some little thing, but it will be right in the line with the thing the Lord is working out.

The Holy Spirit has a mind, Jesus has a plan, God has a program, and when you are yielded He can fit you in; but until you are broken, and your plans are given up you will never bring forth fruit in your season. You will be trying to have Springtime in December; you will be planting radishes in a snowbank and calling it work. The man who is filled with the Holy Spirit does not seem to do any more than anybody else. But, oh, it counts! it counts! and when he reaches maturity he looks back over his life, and sees *that* one he tried to help established; and *this* one going on with the Lord, and the other one standing true; and while the other fellow seemed to be doing a whale of a thing, his work did not abide because it was wrought out in the wisdom and power of the flesh,

and consequently he did not bring forth any fruit in his season.

When my father died there wasn't one of his children working for Jesus. Yet he died in perfect peace, and said to some one who spoke to him about it: "Why, that was all settled long ago; they have swallowed the hook, and the Lord will pull in the line before long." He had gone on the promise that if you train up children in the way they should go, when they are old they will not depart from it. God began to pull in the line on me, and I wondered what was going on; but the first thing I knew, I got the gaff-hook in my heart, and He dragged me in, and I landed in the boat all right.

God is working; keep your fingers out of the machinery. Any one who is filled with the Holy Spirit takes things to God, and knows that He is faithful. He is not fussing and nervous and fidgety about problems. He knows that God has heard, and because He has heard, he knows that He is going to answer and to work. Hallelujah! O what a joy it is, what calm comes down into the soul when men work with God in the power of the Holy Spirit! "He shall bring forth his fruit in his season."

VII

THE REFRESHING MAN

Sixth of a Series of Sermons on the First Psalm

His leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."—*Psalm 1:3*.

Surely any man who wants to be a Christian wants to be a successful Christian. The man who is run down at the heels and is out at the elbows, is surely not that way because he desires failure, but because he has not laid hold of the laws that tend to make him a success; or if he has laid hold of them he has not obeyed them.

If you are not a successful Christian, it is not because you do not want to be a successful Christian, but you have not given sufficient attention to the things that make it possible for Jesus Christ to be all to you that He has planned to be. Perhaps you have seen the life of a victorious Christian from afar, and you are like the poor boy outside the bakery. He looks in through the window at the delightful buns and cakes, but he hasn't the wherewithal to get on the inside. You have looked at the glorious lives of other men and women who have found Jesus in His fullness, lives so magnificent and wonderful, so real and victorious, that you have felt as if you did not have the price for such a life, when right within your possession you had

it, if you had only paid it. If you had only been willing to do what Jesus asked you might have entered into all the fullness of God.

Now this fullness of Jesus Christ—that is, having all that He planned that we should have, all that He purposes for us—is typified by Canaan Land in the Bible. That land is described as flowing with milk and honey—not barren, and dreary, and full of failure, with darkness, and dread, and remorse, and condemnation. It is a land that sparkles with springs. The fields are filled with waving grain; the corn is in the ear; the honey is in the rock; the grass is green; the hills are filled with cedars, and the odor of the flowers fills the sunlit air.

“A land of corn and wine and oil;
Favored with God's peculiar smile,
With every blessing blest;
There dwells the Lord our Righteousness,
Who keeps His own in perfect peace
And everlasting rest.”

Canaan is a wonderful land. The Holy Spirit in His fullness makes real all that has been provided for us in this land. The Word of God tells us that on the last day of the feast Jesus stood and cried, saying: “If any man thirst let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.” That is a challenge to me, and it ought to be a challenge to every Christian, *a real challenge*. Is your life barren like the Arizona desert, or have you entered into a Christian life that really has water in it,

where crops are raised, and where your life is a life of bloom and fruitfulness?

Our text says: "His leaf also shall not wither." I am speaking to you about the fullness of the Holy Spirit, and this has to do with the "water" side of the Holy Spirit. He wants to make the Spirit of Jesus within us do the work that water does in the tree, so as to keep the leaf always green, always delightful and bright.

I remember the first time I went to see Niagara Falls. I had come from Wyoming where it was dry and barren, where we raise fine cactus and sage brush, and great jack-rabbits. Although we had lots of land, very little of it was fenced in. The cattle roamed about seeking food. They managed to get a meager living, but, oh, how we needed water! We felt that if we could only get a great reservoir of water, we could irrigate and raise all kinds of things on that fertile soil; my, how we needed water! As I stood at Niagara and saw that awful torrent of water pitching and foaming and tearing its way down through the rapids, and over that precipice—the whole Lake seemingly running to waste—I began to ask myself: "How in the world could we pick that up and take it to Wyoming? How could we ever pipe it out there? Whatever is the use of its being spilled from one Lake to another when we need it so badly in that dry barren land?"

Now if you get this vision it is the finest thing that will come to you as a Christian. Here is a Christian life, fertile in its elements, and yet barren. You have life, and you are raising something; probably you will

have to admit that that old temper of yours is cactus-stuff growing there, and folks who come into contact with you get a little prick here and there; you are sarcastic, and hard to get along with, and yet there is life in you, a peculiar kind of prickly cactus-life.

There is sage brush growing in your life also. Now sage brush is awfully bitter. I do not know whether you have ever tasted any of it or not; but the cow-puncher, when he becomes very thirsty, reaches down and gets a little sage brush and eats it. It is very bitter, but it makes the water run in his mouth. Maybe when some one was awfully thirsty they came to you for help, and it was so bitter that it started something, but you had not water for them. You are a dandy critic, and can tell people exactly where they went wrong. If it were not for you the world would not go round at all. You think your judgment is fine, and you are logical and legal. I have seen some legal Christians exactly like sage brush. When you talk about the grace of God they begin to talk about the law of God. They are always speaking of the law, and are never cheerful and happy and abounding in hope. There is no smell of roses about them at all, nothing but the sage brush smell. Sage brush is not delightful to live on, nor to be around, but the half-starved steers try to get enough sustenance from it to keep alive. We have to admit that you have life, but men have never raised fat and lovely cattle on sage brush.

Perhaps you realize that there is another life, a bountiful life, a life without the cactus and sage brush—a life where there are green pastures, still

waters, flowers and trees, and those other things that grow in profusion—"love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control." The very essence of Jesus Himself does not abound in your heart, and if men and women come to rest beneath the green leaves of your life, you haven't much comfort to give them. You are so wrapped up in self that you are no help in the world to them. Your leaf is withered. They come beneath the tree of your life, but there are no gentle leaves whispering to each other in the spreading branches, fanned by the breezes, under which they can find shelter from the summer heat, and get real refreshment. Your poor life is barren like the Arizona desert.

The Holy Spirit is frequently typified in the Word of God by water, significant of refreshment, natural refreshment. As you look on the lovely stream that flows out of the heart of Jesus, do you not feel like crying out: "O God, let that Niagara be connected with my life!" Other people have found out what this "water" will do in the human heart; this water of life in Christ Jesus. Jesus said to the woman at the well: "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

O how I love that word "springing!" There is none of that old pump business there, no carrying water in a barrel, and finding wigglers in it after a couple of days. Some of you who have lived on the plains know what I refer to. When you bring water from a river or spring to a distance, and let it stand for a few days, and take the cover off the barrel, you can hardly stand its odor. But Jesus says: "The water that I

shall give you shall be in him a well of water *springing up*." Sparkling and cool; oh, what a delight it is! Himself fresh and flowing within. He is in us and we are in Him.

These "waters" of God break out in most wonderful places, these waters that refresh human lives. You would imagine that all the springs in the world would be down in the valley; but bless your heart! when you go up into the rocks, and into the high mountains, you will find that right out of a granite rock, which has been burst asunder by the hand of God, and thrown up high into a mountain peak, right out from one of the crevices will spring some of the most luscious water you ever tasted in your life. I have climbed up to the snow-line in many a mountain, and found bubbling up from underneath a gigantic rock a wonderful spring. How I drank from it! I did not take a cup, but I got down on my stomach and pushed my face into it, and let my whole face drink as well as drawing it up with my mouth.

God's waters spring up in the hard places of life, not in the easy places. In those times in your life when there has come to you almost a death-blow; a ripping earthquake that has changed all your life, and has seemed to throw you high and dry above everything—out of this brokenness of your life, when all your schemes have failed, when all your dreams have come to nought, when your ambitions have quit, when you have had to stand by the deathbed of some one you loved better than life—right in such an hour God has let the waters of the Holy Spirit flow into your life; for it is in such an hour of brokenness that God

lets the water of the Holy Spirit flow in all His fullness.

Sitting near Jesus at the well was a poor woman with a broken life. She had sipped at the cisterns of life, she had tasted the sparkling wine, she had imbibed deeply of the pleasures of passion. Hers was a scarlet life, and she had sipped at this personality and at that, at this banquet and at that; she had known the gay butterfly-life of the world. But all had vanished. Her looks were gone. Her reputation was gone. Everything that a woman might hold dear was gone. She had become the offscouring of the world. Jesus knew her character, and her reputation, and yet in this hour of her poverty, when He revealed to her His own character, and the fact that He knew hers—in *such* an hour she took a drink of the water that Jesus Christ Himself offered, and went to her friends, calling: "Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did, is not this the Christ?"

There is a crisis hour in the Christian life when you are no longer content to walk as a carnal Christian. The blow falls. The flesh is revealed, and you are determined to walk in the Spirit. In that hour when God shows you yourself, as you never saw yourself before; when you see the putrid pride of your life; the horrible selfishness of your interests; the miserable self-seeking; the hateful ambition; the awfulness of this driving, wiggling thing that has wormed its way down through the centuries called "the human heart"; this heart of deceitfulness; yes, in the hour that He reveals to you the rottenness of your own fallen nature; you will cry out: "O God, out of this cactus-life, out

of this sage brush life, out of this awful, barren life, let the waters flow!" In that crisis hour the Holy Spirit will come in His fullness, when *at last* you are willing to turn from the life of the flesh, and walk in the Spirit.

God wants to give you a vision of His ability to make your life what it never was before, by the incoming of the power and abidingness of the Holy Spirit; and He expresses this thought in these words: "His leaf also shall not wither."

I want next to call your attention to the work of the Holy Spirit indicated in the water and its relation to the tree. Water is a conveyor of the elements that are necessary to the life of the tree. The water in the soil where the tree is planted, mixes the elements, and pulls them up from the soil through the fine little roots of the tree, up through the trunk, into the branches, and away to the furthestmost leaves. Isn't that a marvelous thing! Set in the ground the roots are useless. The *water* must be there. Just so God takes the Word, but the Word is not sufficient in itself, the Holy Spirit must be mixed with the Word. This is the "water" side. God shakes up your soul, and then He shakes up the Word, and takes a verse and churns it around in your heart, and you draw up the truth of that Word of God and it becomes part of you. Water implies the conveying power of the Holy Spirit; and if you are to have a life of power, a life of fruit-bearing, you must have the fullness of the Holy Spirit to mix the Word of God into your life, to make that Word into experience and transform it into life.

The Saviour promised that "When He, the Spirit

of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth"; so that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to take of the things of Christ and show them unto you. It is the business of water to take the elements out of the soil and turn them into tree-life. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to take out of Jesus Christ, His love, and joy, and peace, and courage, and faithfulness, and run them into your soul and make you one with God. The Holy Spirit lays hold of the promises of God and puts them in your heart, so that, as Peter says: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we may be made partakers of the Divine nature." It is the work of the Holy Spirit to lay hold of these things and bring them to our remembrance, calling our attention to the things of God. How we do lack, how we do suffer, how our leaf withers, because the Holy Spirit is not allowed to be operative in taking these things of Jesus, and by making them over to us, keeping us fresh and green and fruitful.

When I was a boy my mother brought the whole army of children to church every Sunday morning, and we had to learn the text. Father was the preacher, and if nobody came, he had a "crowd" when we got in, for we filled two pews. The older children sat in the first pew, and mother—the general of the whole army—sat in the second pew with the baby on her lap. The next older sat next to her, and next, and next, *et cetera*. Everybody started to wash-up early in the morning. The older ones washed themselves and helped with the younger ones. Down a little further, mother had to give inspection to see whether they had

gone over the high-water mark or not. Unless there were complications, we were ready when the older had finished with the younger ones, and mother had finished with the baby. One of the children had to be tied to a post after he was cleaned up, because mother knew he would be in the back yard in a minute. When we were all ready Rader's Brigade came to church. General Mother sat there and we all had to obey—thank God for that! We never thought of such a thing as asking her to let us get up and go out and take a drink—we *behaved*. We sat there straight through the service, every one of us. If any fidgeting went on, mother never changed the look in her eye, nor the expression of her face, but she just “ahem-med” and cleared her throat, and that cleared up the trouble. If it did not, she had something at home that cleared it up finely.

We had something to do when we went to church; we had our Bibles, and we had to take the text which the preacher announced, look it up, and learn it. I said we had to *learn* it. Did you get the idea? And we made good all right. We had it when we got home. One hot summer morning, when the sermon seemed particularly long, I was watching the chandeliers, wishing that every one of them had a hose attached, so that the water could be turned on, and we could take a drink, and could pass it on to our neighbor, I was very thirsty, but I learned the verse. It was a hard one: “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.”

That is a horrible verse for a boy to learn on a hot Sunday morning, but I learned it, and put it away in this "hay-mow" of mine, and left it there, and went off, and forgot it through the years. I never remember having any use for it at all, until a few years ago the Holy Spirit began dealing with my life in a wondrous way. God was chastening me, and was allowing the fire to burn in my heart. Things were being burned out of my life. So many trials were coming one after another, that I felt maybe God was against me, that He was displeased with me, that possibly His love had run out. Yet the Holy Spirit witnessed to His sweet presence, but the fiery trials continued.

While I was wrestling in prayer, this blessed water-power of the Holy Spirit washed loose out of my brain this wonderful Word of God, learned in my boyhood days. The Holy Spirit dropped down into my heart the juiciest lump that I ever remember in all my life. I could repeat it from memory there before God on my knees—"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous." It was grievous,—"nevertheless afterward" it yielded the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

I said, "Lord, I will take my tests, I will let Thee chasten me." Then the Holy Spirit went on with other precious things from the Word: "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastise-

ment, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons."

The reason so many people haven't any fruit to-day is because the roots of their lives do not run down into the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit cannot draw the Word up into their experience. These are dark days, and there are testings sent that God may work up into our lives through the water-power of the Holy Spirit, who is the Conveyor of the truth, the food that we need for our souls.

Oh, slip out of your old sage brush and cactus, and barren life of the flesh, and slip into Canaan Land, where Christ's resources—Himself all that you need—and the power of the Holy Spirit, to convey it, is at your disposal! All He now asks you is this, "Will you swap?" "Will you trade?" That is the question. If you trade, it means a life of constant reading of the Word of God, finding out what the things are that He wants you to have and to do; a constant abiding in Him in prayer, so that He can convey, by the Holy Spirit, those things that you have found in His Word into your heart, and make them real in your life. Then you will know the meaning of the words: "His leaf also shall not wither."

Dare you, *dare you*, believe that you can get Niagara to Wyoming? Dare you believe that the resources of heaven can be put into that little life of yours? Yes, Hallelujah! I believe it! I believe it; I dare, Lord, I dare, and faith is the victory that overcometh the world—my faith in the ability of Jesus to be my victory, and my life, and my joy. O Hallelujah!

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VIII

THE UNDEFILED MAN

“Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord.”—*Psalm 119:1*.

This hundred and nineteenth Psalm begins with the word “blessed.” We have already seen what this word means. In a worldly sense we associate it with the thought of a man whom we describe as a “lucky” fellow, a “fortunate” man. Some men seem to succeed in whatever they undertake, they have the ability to do things better than other men, and the world calls them “lucky.” The Scripture, however, never speaks of a “lucky” man, or a “fortunate” man, but it says much about a *blessed* man.

Taking this view of the word “blessed,” Christians are a “lucky” crowd. They do not deserve anything but hell, and yet have been made the sons of God, and have become more than conquerors through Him that loved them. They do not have to fight their own battles, and are the most peculiarly blessed people on earth. All that the world can give to men cannot compare for a moment with what has been given to any child of God; the man who has been a sinner, but can now truthfully say: “Beloved, now am I a son of God.”

If you were as rich as Cræsus in a few years you

would have to give up every dollar, turn your face to the wall and leave it all, as every other wealthy man has had to do; but, thank God, the riches that the "blessed" man has in Christ Jesus grow more precious day by day and are eternal. No matter what trials come to a child of God, they cannot diminish the value of his salvation in Christ Jesus. The man inheriting a million dollars is liable to be stricken with nervous prostration the next week on account of the folks trying to get it away from him. He is really more to be pitied than he was the week before receiving his legacy. When he was simply a fireman on board a liner he was living on lowly fare, but enjoying himself. Since the papers announced his good fortune, he has not known where to go to get rid of the people, and to get out of the way of that million dollars that was threatening to crush him.

Perhaps you think you could stand the weight of a lot of success but you could not. You may be thinking just now: "If I had a better opportunity I could achieve success in my department and should be much happier." But the chances are, your success would only become a burden to you, and might be the worst thing that ever happened. Thank God, however, we *can* stand salvation, because it is in the hands of Jesus.

You remember that suggestive dream of John Newton's. He thought he was on a ship, holding the jewel of his salvation in his hand, and he carelessly dropped it into the ocean. The Lord Jesus Christ stood beside him, looked at him reproachfully, then plunged into the water, and after a terrific struggle with the elements, came up with the jewel in his hand. Newton

reached for his jewel, but Jesus said: "Oh, no, you lost it the first time, but you shall never lose it again, for I will keep it for you." Adam lost his salvation overboard, but, thank God, the salvation that Jesus gives us, He keeps for us Himself. It is "reserved in heaven for us who are kept by the power of God unto salvation."

Are we not a blessed people? Perhaps you think you deserve salvation, but I never did a thing for mine; and if you are really saved, you never did a thing for yours. It was an unmerited gift. We are blessed far above the average man. I am not saying to any one, "I am holier than thou!" but I can look the whole world in the face and say: "I am more *blessed* than the men of all the ages. All the honors that can be heaped upon men by men are as nothing compared to the wonders of the salvation of Jesus Christ."

This eternal life, which is God's gift, "is incorruptible, and undefiled, and it fadeth not away." You may have the talents of a Caruso, or the wealth of a Rockefeller, or the pen of a great writer, but the world's most talented men have all passed away, many of them, alas! without eternal life. In contrast to them notice the blessedness of Paul, as he says: "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." If you are feeling a trifle discouraged, you had better begin to count up your riches and see how wealthy you really are. You may be "dead broke" to-day, as far as money is concerned, but thank God, there is one

thing that cannot be stolen from you, and that is your salvation, and you can joyfully sing:

"A tent or a cottage, why should I care?
They're building a mansion for me over there!
Though exiled from home, yet still I may sing,
All glory to God, I'm the child of a King.

"I'm the child of a King! The child of a King!
With Jesus my Saviour, I'm the child of a King!"

We are a "blessed" crowd, and the world does not understand how we can shout when we are in trouble, or look into the grave, when we have committed some loved one to the earth, and still be happy, for the world cannot see what we have to make us "blessed." A poor bum may be going along in his wretched clothing, his face pinched and wan. People wonder why he is smiling, and say: "Why do you stand there smiling when you have nothing but those dirty old clothes?" Opening his hand, he exclaims, "See what I have here!" Some one has come along and slipped a whole handful of twenty-dollar gold pieces into his hand. Believers seem like fools to the world, but this is no surprise to them, for the Lord Jesus said: "In the world ye shall have tribulation"; but the world cannot see that eternal salvation is safeguarded for them by the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are indeed a "blessed" crowd, and the things of the earth ought not in any way to drag down our spirit, although trials and temptations will come. *Why should they come?* Because God has a right, and the devil has also a right, to test us, in order to find out whether we are more delighted with our salvation than

we are with our state in this world; more delighted with our heavenly standing than with our earthly position. God has a perfect right at any time to test our faith in what He has done for us.

Job was greatly rewarded because he was one of God's undefiled men. He loved God and kept God's statutes. He was a perfect man before God, doing the work God asked him to do. When Jehovah challenged Satan: "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in all the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil?"; the devil had a right to say, "Isn't Job serving you for what he is getting out of it, for the rewards you are giving him?" The devil is the accuser, and he said to God: "You take something away from that fellow and he will quit you tomorrow." Lots of men do that. How many times have you heard them say: "Take that man's salary away from him and he would quit immediately." "If you did this or that to that man, he would never do any more personal work as long as he lived." Some men who you thought were fervent have had something nasty said about them; they became discouraged and said: "We're going to quit." We forget that we are bound to undergo testings to find whether we will go through with God, or quit as other folks do.

God has a perfect right, as I have said, to test us, and so has the devil, to find out whether we really believe in the uncreated life we profess to have, and the wondrous gifts it brings with it, or whether our heart is still clinging to the things of the world. Some folks are Christians, but not *tried* Christians. They

come up to a casket which contains the form of a dear child, look God in the face, and say: "How *could* You do it?" They have never been reconciled to their bereavement, and there is consequently no acquiescence to the will of God in their hearts. The Lord has a right to find out whether our salvation is based upon our wives, our mothers, our sisters, our husbands, our children, and whether *their* life or death will alter our joy in Him.

With a good many people, let some one fall alongside, and down they go too, saying, "I guess I'll go." The devil has a right to know whether you have a faith of this kind. If you are to have the crown "which the Lord the righteous Judge will give to them that endure," you must undergo the tests to prove that His gift to you is cherished. Hence it is written: "Blessed is the man that endureth testing; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of righteousness which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." Your crown is awarded to you for meeting these tests; and for proving whether you consider yourself wealthy in possessing this "blessed" life which is the gift of God.

Every one loves to see love tested. Every woman loves to see her lover tested; and there is no joy in her heart like seeing his love prove true when she is not there to watch; and of proving, by his faithfulness, that he loves her best. Many a man has thought that his wife loved diamonds, jewelry, clothes, ease, automobiles—the things he was able to give her—more than she really cared for him. A wealthy friend in the East had lived with his wife seventeen years, and

he thought she was in love with her mansion, her automobiles, her servants, her jewels, the kind of life she could live with his money. Things went wrong. He lost his money, and he lost his health in trying to bridge over the crisis. He went to a sanitarium for four weeks. He came back and said: "My dear, I have thought it all out. You are accustomed to these things of wealth, and I cannot bear to look you in the face. I cannot give you these things now, and I do not feel that I have a right even to hold you as my wife. I am up against it, and I am quite willing for you to do as you wish."

"Do you know what she did?" he asked me, when he told me this. She laughed in my face: "Why, my darling," she said as she snapped her fingers, "Do you think I care *that* for diamonds? If you will only get well I will gladly live with you in a dugout!" Say, that would be enough to add four inches to a fellow's chest expansion! To have a woman live with him seventeen years in luxury, and then love him enough to go with him to a dugout. That was a great revelation! Oh, how the angels of God rejoice when you lose your wealth, and are at the end of your resources, and can still look God in the face and say: "*I will go through fire or water with You!*" How it must gladden the heart of God when you stand true; and how His heart must ache when you fail!

He abideth faithful, however, and He will never quit you. I turned my back on Him, but He followed me—bless His precious Name—until He got me close up to His bosom. Oh, what a wonderful, wonderful Jesus! All His gifts are free, but He has the right

to test our love, and our appreciation of the gifts He has purchased for us.

Your whole heart, your whole sensitive soul, was marvelously made by the hand of God. This new-born creation that is within you, that vibrates with the life, the sunshine of heaven—when you have once trusted in Jesus, and have given over all to Him, resolved to trust Him alone—*is all of God*. This is what He longs for, your loyalty, your love, your trust. Are you going to walk in the flesh, that thing which Jesus died to put out of the way? Are you going to choose that garbage; are you going to turn to the things of the earth and of the self-life, or are you going to walk in the new life, the Christ-life, and seek only those things that are above? "*Delight* thyself in the Lord"—he says—not *endure* Him. Many people endure the Lord, put up with Him, but that is far different from delighting ourselves in Him. Some people have married and get along all right, and never fuss; but they have no more love around their homes, than if they were a pair of mummies. If you were looking for a love-match, a delightful love-bouquet to put before somebody, you would not walk into *their* garden to pick it. Some people are married to the Lord, but as the world looks at them, it says: "They are a kind of a sour proposition, not very well preserved—they look more as if they were pickled."

The world is a little suspicious of those who are always talking about their love for each other when they are in company; but there are little things that lovers do that are a great testimony; the way they act shows what they are thinking. I have heard fellows

talk about being gentlemen; and others, who never mentioned the word; and I could not help noticing the deference they showed to others; the way they lifted their hats; and the character of their conversation. The way you act in the presence of Jesus tells something of your regard for Him. When His name is mentioned, if you are all attention, people know that the sound of His name has a charm for you; and no matter what doctrine you may promulgate, they can tell whether or not you love Him; and they say to themselves: "I do not know exactly Who this Jesus is, but I know that man gives all his time, and thought, and attention, and heart-interest to Him. The world knows where the interest of people lies. Pass a man on the street, and say: "Who is that man you spoke to?" "Oh, that is a fellow who works over there," your companion will answer. Talk to him a moment, and you will find out he is a golf-fiend. That is his chief interest. Pass another, and your friend will say, "He is one of those church guys." They have them all spotted. That which we love stands out in our lives, and the world knows us by that. Others know us, thank God! for the love we bear the Lord, for "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

The text speaks of the place where your heart is—not what you say, not what you profess, but what you love, and it calls you "blessed." "Blessed are the undefiled *in the way*, who walk in the law of the Lord." What a marvelous compliment Jesus paid to Nathaniel, when He laid his soul bare before those men, saying: "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile."

If he had been choosing an athlete, He would have looked the man over from the physical standpoint. If he had been in educational work, he would said: "Here is a man who is a scientific thinker," but a new kind of man is walking the earth, and he opens him up, and says: "I am not looking at his head, or at his muscle, but I realize that here is one in whom is no camouflage. He is not one thing, and painting himself to be another; there is no guile in him, but he is as straight and open as a child." Jesus knew what his real character was as truly as an athlete would have recognized an athlete. That is a sign of God's working, when you see yourself as you are. Men tell you what they think you are, and sometimes you believe they are telling the truth, but in your inmost heart you know they are deceived about you.

The glory of the work of the Holy Spirit to me was this, that while He was dealing with me, He brought out information about me; and held it in the light until I had to admit the truth about myself. We frequently possess characteristics which we do not want to admit before God. It is easy for us to admit some sins, but there are things about ourselves that we do not want to admit. Some people will confess that they do not always tell the truth. Others would rather die than admit such a thing, and yet in their hearts they know they do camouflage things; but the Holy Spirit puts His finger on them and says: "That is exactly what you are."

If you are going to walk in this "blessed" way, the way must be undefiled by camouflage. I believe there is nothing God so desires in the heart of a man as a

willingness to come before Him and face His judgment. God does not ask men to be good. He does not ask them to act as if they had a loving heart when they have not; He does love to deal with a man who will come to him and admit: "Lord, that's what I am!" All cleansing, for the Christian, is based not upon covering, but upon confession. When God is dealing with a man He loves him to be open and straightforward before Him, that is all. Because God is honest it is an awful insult to God to think you can deceive Him. You will never get anywhere with God by hiding sin. As long as you treat God as if He were a man Who cannot look behind your thoughts, read the secret things of your heart, and show you things about yourself that you never even knew of, you will make no progress spiritually. You will be always defending yourself, and when a man is defending himself, he cannot possibly grow spiritually. He is defending that which Christ died to put out of the way. God wants you to hate the flesh-life more and more every day, and to fall in love with His matchless character.

"Blessed are the *undefiled* in the way." When you realize this, it will not be long before something is done in your life that will make it possible for you to walk in unbroken fellowship with God, for, "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another."

A committee once asked me to recommend a young man to them. I told them I did not know of one just then, but would be glad to remember their request. Later I met a young man I knew, and whom I had

seen ordained. He spoke of another young man, and I told him of the request that had been made, and asked: "Do you suppose this man would do?" My friend, a very spiritual man, looked at me, and said: "That fellow will make good in any job that God gives him, in any door that is opened to him." I inquired, "Why are you so sure about it?" He answered, "He is the best *confessor* I ever knew." That satisfied me, and I wrote the pulpit committee that this man was all right. They sent for him, he preached on Sunday night, and came before them on Tuesday, saying: "Now, gentlemen, I want you to get me right." Then he went back and told them what his life had been, and said: "That is what I am, and you cannot expect anything of me, but, if we can trust Jesus together, we shall get somewhere."

One of the members of that committee, who was connected with a big store, said to me: "I heard that man preach, but when he got through talking about himself, I knelt to pray and most of our church-members started to pray, and we had the greatest prayer-meeting we ever had. I had been in that church fifteen years and had never met God; and here came a young man to take the pastorate, and began by telling the people what he really was." He was one of God's "blessed" ones, "undefiled in the way, walking in the law of the Lord."

God can do something with a good confessor, one who admits that *he* is no good, but who can sing the praises of Jesus, and glory in His great salvation. "Blessed are the undefiled in the way." Oh, keep in the place where you belong; nothing but an old sinner,

saved by grace; and when God puts something before you and asks you to do it, do not bluff, but break. Perhaps this very day he is calling on you to break. I covet nothing on earth so much for myself as "a broken and contrite heart," so that as I look up to Him, I know I am broken by the Holy Spirit, not my breaking, but His breaking. Can you really say:

"Have thy way, Lord, have thy way!
This with all my heart I say.
I'll obey Thee come what may,
Dear Lord, have Thy way."

IX

THE MAN OF ONE DESIRE

"One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple."—*Psalms* 27:4.

When a man gets a vision, it is a composite of the whole man. When John opens his Gospel he says, "In the beginning was the 'Logos,' and the 'Logos' was with God, and the 'Logos' was God."

"The Word," as the ordinary version renders it, in John's prologue, is a concept. A concept is a circle drawn around you, with every possibility that you have included in that circle—all that your parents have bequeathed to you as far as blood, and possibilities of personality, and money, are concerned. Inside of that circle your wife and children, and all the combinations that could possibly be made out of the different factors of your life—everything that you can possibly do through all these factors—that is the concept of you.

When a man gets a vision it involves the whole of the man. It is something that he sees, that takes in everything that he is; it is something that centralizes everything that he is; focussing all his plans, all his ability and all his heart's desire.

I have hunted through the Psalms to find out what

was really the vision of David. Every man has a vision. You are laboring in a certain field of the world because somewhere you got a vision of what you wanted to do. You have not attained it exactly, but you are laboring toward it. I was eager to know what was the vision of a man like David, wonderful man that he was, and I found his vision in the fourth verse of this Psalm: "*One thing have I desired.*"

That is what led him on; that was his vision, and to that everything else was subordinated. To the realization of that vision everything else was made to coöperate. David determined that there should be coördination between that vision and everything else in his life. This is his vision: "That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple."

That is the overmastering desire of David. It does not make any difference whether the subordinate things are near or whether they are far; whether they are natural or supernatural, they all have to get out of the way for this fast-moving train of his heart.

You have probably wondered many times, as I have, why you were disappointed. Why *are* we so often disappointed? I have found out myself that I am disappointed because of my desires. If that is a fact, then I ought to examine my desires and weed them out.

Down in a garden the other day there was a little fellow weeding out the onions. Some one came along who knew very little about weeding, and looking at the onions the boy was pulling out, he said: "Are you

throwing those away? Why are you pulling out the onions?" "If I don't," answered the boy, "they will all be little spindling things; none of them will come to full size, but if I weed out some of them it will leave room for the others to grow."

It may be you are disappointed; your life is spindling, just a common ordinary life that never will amount to much because you have so many desires. Do you not need weeding out; a real thinning out? Every Christian ought to have had the weeds out long ago. It is not sin, maybe, that needs to be weeded out to-day, but you have too many desires; you have too many things you want, and not one of them can come to a head.

David saw this, and he said: I am going to thin out those other things, for "*One thing* have I desired of the Lord." A lady who was addressing children, held up a gorgeous American Beauty rose for the children to see. There it was on its rich green stem, from which all the suckers had been picked, and from which all the little buds except one had been broken off; this one blossom was left to receive all the life of the rose-bush. She contrasted it with the withered branch, full of twigs, but which was good for nothing but to be burned.

David had a thousand desires, and there are hundreds of things that a king could do that you could not think of doing; and a thousand things that a king might desire that you have no use for and no need for. You have a lot of little desires in your heart sucking the vitality of your spiritual life, and you need thinning out. "What shall I thin?" That is up to

you and the Lord. You had better get into your secret chamber as soon as possible and let the Lord thin you out. Say: "Lord, what is it in my life that is really going to count? I do a great many things; I am like the man who 'was busy here and there'; but, Lord, what is the one thing I ought to be doing?"

David was a wise enough man to make a business proposition of his life and say: "I cannot run a furniture business, and a blacksmith shop, and a grocery store at the same time, therefore, Lord, I desire one thing." Disappointed, broken-hearted people I meet everywhere. They are people who always have the blues, because they have so many desires. They cannot all be attained, and therefore their lives are blasted, and life becomes so thin that there is no sturdiness, no real growth, no comeliness or completeness, because of the little cheap desires that are growing in the heart.

David said: "*One thing* have I desired." Do you ever remember the hour in your life when you got down to one thing? If you ever had the fullness of the joy of the Lord, you had it when you got to that place in your life, that time in the altar-service, or in your own room, or out under the stars, when God shaved you down to just one thing. You may have stood at a casket or a coffin, and God brought you face to face with a thousand things in your life that were not worth looking at.

When in that moment of crisis you selected just one and said:

"I'll live for Him Who died for me,
How happy then my life shall be;

I'll live for Him Who died for me,
My Saviour and My God:"

then you got somewhere. When you really went through with God and pulled out an awful lot of onions, shed a lot of desires, and they faded out of your life, and you said: "*This one thing* I want, dear Lord"—then something happened.

You remember Jacob got thinned out, and God had to wrestle with him, as an Angel. He threw him back time after time. He disjoined his hip, and finally Jacob came through, and said: "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me." Jacob had his "onion-patch" of desires, and God had to break him. Then he was able to say to him: "You are a prince, and I have changed your name from Jacob (supplanter) to Israel (prince of God). For as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

When God said to Abraham: "In blessing I will bless thee; and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed"; it was because He was able to say: "Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from Me." These glorious promises were made to Abraham, not because he had given God ninety-nine things, but because he had not withheld from God "his son, his only son, Isaac."

Here you are with desires that are sapping the vitality of your Christian life; they are useless to you; their seeds will never be worth anything. If some of

your desires were to become full blown, they would blight and blast your life. You did not pluck them when they were small. You did not allow God to root them out, and say "No," to those things; and they have consequently grown upon you and mastered you.

Oh, let Him speak to you as you read these words, and hear Him say: "May I put my hand in your heart, and deal with these indiscriminate desires?" He is a Gardener and He knows how to weed out the garden of your heart. Believe me, He won't tear out one thing from your life that is going to benefit it. If *you* were going into the garden to weed it, you would probably pull up a lovely little flower that was just going to bloom; but this Gardener never took anything away from any one of us but a weed or something that would ruin our life. He purges us that we might bring forth more fruit. Are you going to be utterly yielded to him and challenge Him to do this?

Some of you are saying as you read these words: "Yes, I know what you are talking about; I used to know in a second when God's hand went into my heart to pull out something that had taken root in it; and I know the minute that I yielded to God how His blessing flooded my life." I was speaking to one who used to have such a joy-life in the Lord, but it is all gone. Oh, if you have known what it is to have the joy of the Lord, which has somehow leaked out, and something is growing in your heart that is sapping your spiritual vitality, some desire that is taking you away from God, let Him deal with it as you read these words. The devil says to you: "Oh, there is no sin in

this or in that!" I am not talking about sin, I am talking about some *good* thing which is the enemy of the *best*.

Why did Jesus say of the rich man, that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for him to enter heaven? Because his desires for money were so great, that He had to prune that man, and thin him of these things until nothing was left. When that has taken place, thank God, he can go through the eye of the needle. I know rich men whom God has put through the eye of the needle, and by the time He got them through He had them "awfully thinned." Are you going to let God thin you and say: "Lord, I am willing to take the thinning whatever it may cost?" If not, He will have to abase you for "He that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Will you not humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, and let him make you a man of one desire? Who are you? Why is it that you will not go down before God? You have a reputation; little desires have got possession of you, and you say: "Lord, I cannot get along if I do not have these things."

I am so glad that Jesus did not have a reputation. He never could have taken the scoffing and the spitting if He had considered a reputation. Jesus stood for the truth. It cost Him His life, but He did not have any other desire than to die for us. I am so glad that no ambition could ever grow within His bosom. Humbly He walked, taking the despite and the rejection; "the contradiction of sinners against

Himself." He made Himself of no reputation, and when they hung Him on the Cross He never wriggled to get off nor to say: "What will people think of Me?" "He was despised and rejected of men."

If the least bit of criticism comes your way, you resent it and say: "O God, don't let that touch me." If the least breath of suspicion begins to come your way, and men misunderstand and malign you; and your friends begin to forsake you; and you have to walk the lonely path, you are tempted to say: "O God, I would rather compromise and walk with the crowd."

Any of you who want to go through with God, can look back to the place where you said "Good-by" to this one, and "Good-by" to that one, who did not want to stand the pace. This very hour some of you may be looking up into His face with the tears in your eyes, saying to some desire: "Good-by, good-by, I am going along with God, alone with Him." It may not be a wicked or an evil thing that you have to give up; it may be something that is stealing the affection that belongs only to Him. Then say:

"The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be;
Help me to tear it from Thy throne,
And worship only Thee."

What are your desires? Can you say with David: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, *that will I seek after?*" Oh, determine to seek after it, until God has plucked this old garden of all the things that rob you of strength and beauty, and only *one thing* remains.

The trick of the devil in the modern Church is that he has got us to do a thousand things that are good in our Church work; but they are not *the* things we should be seeking after. He has persuaded us to do a thousand things that do not contribute to the evangelization of the world. Many good things in their way, but they are not *the* things that God has called us to do. When will the Church learn to give up these good things for the best things?

God is calling us in these days, as never before, to a life where we shall have to walk alone with Him, and dwell in the secret place of the Most High. These are strange times—fiery trials are to try you, misunderstandings will arise that are so deep that you cannot even sound them with a plummet, and you will have to crawl back into Jesus, and say: "Lord, Thou art my refuge and strength. I do not understand, but, thank God, I do not have to understand."

A man of the world was talking to me about something that had happened in his family. He said to me, "Why is that?" I answered: "I would not ask that question for a million dollars." "Why?" he asked, in astonishment. "That is none of my business," I replied; "that is cutting in on the hand of God, and pulling His hand off the machinery of your life. It is none of my business. My business is to say: 'My Jesus doeth all things well, and all things are working together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.'"

If there are other desires around, do you not see that you are not abiding where David longed to abide? With all his complex affairs, as the king of Israel, and

the leader of God's people, with all the problems that came to him in the gate, settling the disputes among the tribes, he cried out: "One thing, *one thing*, have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may *dwell* in the house of the Lord all the days of my life." Do you desire to dwell in Jesus and walk in Him? This is the abiding place that makes life fruitful, for Jesus said: "Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in Me." Learn to abide in Him; to live in the temple all the days of your life! O the glory of walking and living and abiding in Jesus!

David continued: "That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, *to behold the beauty of the Lord.*" There are many people who do not know anything about the beauty of the Lord because they have never learned to abide in Him. Paul was able to say: "What things were gain to me those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death."

Adoration is the door to beauty. Unless you appreciate the wonders of the work of Christ on Cal-

vary; and the fact that you have been picked up from the miry clay and have been made a joint-heir with Christ—unless this appreciation comes to your heart and you praise and adore Him, everything will become commonplace to you, and you will know nothing of the beauty of the Lord.

But when the Holy Spirit comes into your life because you have left your flesh outside, nailed to the Cross; all your old life, with its multitudinous desires dead in your union with Him; then you start your prayers with praise and with appreciation of this wonderful dwelling-place. Then you will behold the beauty of the Lord; there will be a real delight to you in your fellowship with Him, and your whole soul will be lighted up with His indwelling. You will never get "lit up" in any other way.

I am not talking about emotion—this is a million worlds more than emotion. Did you ever see anything you wanted to "rave" about? I shall never forget my first view of a canyon in Colorado, and how I felt as I dismounted from my pony and looked into that chasm. I was so overwhelmed that I did not know I had dismounted; and I let my pony go and did not find him for two days. I walked over to the edge of that chasm, and looked into that great canyon, standing with my mouth open, gazing, beholding and bewildered by the beauty of it.

Oh, beloved, did you ever gaze at the beauty of the Son of God, as He came from the glory, paid the price of your redemption, and redeemed you from the power of the devil! When you stand transfixed with this glory, you will "rave." It is more than emotion,

it is a joy unspeakable and full of glory, and you say: "Can it be that this is mine, that this Christ is my Christ; that this God is my God?" Yes, Hallelujah! "He is mine and I am His to all eternity."

Look your inheritance over. Get up on Pizgah's lofty height, this very hour, and view the landscape o'er. Jesus is coming again, He is coming again! Oh, how it ought to thrill our heart! He is going to take all the squalor and the rancor and the sin out of this old world, and be Himself its Ruler and Lord. Let us get rid of our paltry desires and ambitions to-day. Let us be men and women of one desire, so that we can say with David: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to enquire in His temple."

"Thee I can love, and Thee alone,
With pure delight and inward bliss:
To know Thou tak'st me for Thine own,
O what a happiness is this!

"Nothing on earth do I desire,
But Thy pure love within my breast;
This, only this will I require,
And freely give up all the rest."

X

THE MAN WHO LAUGHS

"The Lord said: Arise, anoint him; for this is he."

—*I Samuel 16: 12.*

The text is the record of the anointing of David as King over Israel, chosen by God. The God who swung the stars; the God who said: "Let there be light; and let the waters gather themselves together, and let the dry land appear"; the God who made the fruit trees; the God who pulls in the tide and lets it out; the God who fills the waters with fish and the air with song-birds; this same God said to Samuel: "Arise, anoint him: for this is he." David was the choice of God, he was "picked" by God.

God is not very much interested in stars; He has made thousands of them. God is not very much interested in flowers; He has made millions of them. God is not very much interested in birds; He has made great varieties of them. God is not very much interested in trees; He has made multitudes of them, and can make as many more by the Word of His power. But God is intensely interested in men.

God does not work by machinery; He is never noisy. We are told the Lord thunders, but that is when He is dissatisfied. His work is not done by thunder, but is done in silence, so beautifully that you do not hear the cog wheels squeak as the world rolls

on. God swings it out in space without a cable; and without a hand upon it He swings the sun. Its rays steal down through the ether, and with wondrous rapidity reach the earth and warm the soil. The seeds bring forth without noise; wondrous is the hand of God in all His works. But God is not working by machinery; God is working with men.

When a man is chosen of God, He puts laughter into his life. God is delighted to fill the hearts of men with laughter. The anointing oil that was poured upon the head of David put laughter into David's life. Laughter, after all, is the surplus of life; it is a bubbling over of the emotions, a kind of spasm of exuberance; a delight of the human heart that makes the thorax cackle; something that warms the heart and delights the brain and the imagination so that men are moved to overflowing delight.

The joy of the Lord is our strength. You may hold all kinds of theories, but does your theory lead to joy? Is there a victorious, glorious life within your heart in spite of the conditions that are round about? Whenever this anointing oil which Jesus bestows is put into your heart you will be able to laugh. It is the oil of His presence that makes holy laughter in the life—not only the disposition to laugh at a joke, but the ability to laugh at calamity, to laugh at death, to laugh at the victory which the devil *thought* he had won.

Men laugh at peculiar things. The British do not laugh at the things at which we laugh. They laugh as much as we do, but they laugh at other things. One English friend told me about a man who was being

applauded as he was leaving the platform. He came back, stuck his head around the corner, looked at the people, and said: "Rubber!" Everybody laughed, but he complained: "I saw nothing amusing in 'Rubbah!' " I do not blame him. He did not understand what we mean by the slang expression, "Rubber," and therefore he could not laugh.

We Americans laugh at things out of place or upside down. I did not know it, and tried to spring a joke on an English audience. It hit me back in the face like a cold pancake. It is disconcerting to stand before an audience and not even to get a titter from anybody. They looked at me as if I was an undertaker, because they did not understand my kind of humor.

We are a pioneer people. Our fathers went into the forests to carve out an empire; and as they did, they developed a peculiar sense of knowing when things were in proper shape, when they were in order or out of order. To the ordinary man a hoof-print does not mean anything, but to our forefathers it meant life or death. Was it the print of a mountain cat or of a bear? Was it the footprint of an Indian? If it was, and the Indians had been scouting around through the night, it might mean the death of the whole village. Everything had a meaning that was as deep as life and death. If a man, walking along the trail, heard even the snap of a twig, he would stop and instantly his gun would come to his shoulder pointing toward that place. It might mean the outpost of an Indian camp, or on the other hand it might mean game—meat and life for his family.

Because of this pioneer life, we have developed a peculiar instinct of knowing when things are out of place. Any pioneer people have this keen sense of order or disarrangement; and the relief experienced when they found that the crackling of a twig did not mean danger, produced laughter.

This keen sense of American humor does not only lead to laughter, but Revolution. Abraham Lincoln had it, and he did not stand alone in that respect. If he had been the only humorous man of his kind, men would have thought he was an odd stick, and would not have appreciated him. But other inhabitants of Illinois were possessed of the same pioneer sense of knowing when a thing was out of shape, up-side-down. I was in New Orleans and sought out the spot where Abraham Lincoln had stood in the great slave-market, part of which is still preserved. He came from the boat and the levee and walked up to the slave-pit, never having seen anything like it before in his life. A great negro man was standing on the block, being auctioned off by a white man.

The crowd standing around saw nothing wrong because they had become accustomed to it. This gaunt pioneer with this American sense of humor, who afterwards became President, and who laughed at things that were up-side-down, was not laughing now. He was standing there with his finger-nails cutting into his clenched fists, the blood beating into his brow. Long, lank, lean, he muttered. The same sense that will make a man laugh at things out of joint, now makes this man terribly serious, and he said to himself: "That thing is wrong, and if ever I get a chance

to hit it I'll hit it hard, by God!" And he did hit it.

A life that is devoid of victory is an up-side-down life. If you do not see that you will never have a laugh in your life. God rent the heavens and came down and died on Calvary for sin because life was up-side-down, and men were going to death and to hell. God said: "It is up-side-down, and He came to Calvary to set it right-side-up and to put life in the place of death.

If you are outside Jesus Christ, and cannot see that life is up-side-down, and that Jesus came to set it right-side-up, you are lost and blind. Jesus put a real laugh into life, for instead of my being now under the devil's power, suddenly I see that I am above the devil in Christ Jesus. Instead of my being under sin, I suddenly see I am above sin by His death upon the Cross. Instead of my being held by ties and habits that bind as with chains of iron, Glory to God I am free! "He whom the Son makes free is free indeed." It is the work that Jesus did on Calvary that emancipates a man; it is that which sets him loose, and brings the message: "Arise, anoint him, for this is he." Then God's Spirit moves into the heart of a man and turns him right-side-up; "old things have passed away, and behold all things are become new." Now he has laughter in his soul.

David started his journey of laughter from the moment that Samuel poured the oil upon his head, and he became God's chosen man. Out of the multitude of red heads and freckled faces he was the peculiar one. Of the eight boys of Jesse's he was the last and seemingly the least; but he was chosen of God, for

God was looking at his heart. God is looking at your heart. He knows how wicked all our hearts are, and it is with the heart He is dealing. It is with the heart you feel your joys; it is in the heart you sin; it is within your bosom that the great powers of passion play; it is in your heart the joy flows; and it is in the heart that anger, wrath, malice, take the field, and jealousy reigns, in its awful, terrible agony. From the heart envy runs to the eyes and makes them twitch; out of the heart proceed all these evil things. God is looking at the heart. What for? Is He looking for a clean heart? No, but He is looking for a heart that is willing to be made clean; a heart that would appreciate it and rejoice, if it was cleansed and anointed; a heart that is a candidate for God's indwelling; a heart that sees things are wrong, is willing to admit its sin, and is eager above all things to be made right with God.

This young red-head, out on the stony hillside, minding sheep, insignificant though he was when anointed of God, had nevertheless dreamed his dreams. He had thought on God. His heart went out after God. Not that he did not sin, and was not capable of all the sins of his brothers, but in his heart he wanted God.

There are men and women of all shades and colors of disposition; and as I preach the Holy Spirit rakes with a fine-tooth comb, as it were, over the audience, to see what heart will open to the Son of God; what heart in the audience sees that things are wrong, and that says within itself: "I know there is something better than this. Surely there is something better

than being dominated by sin and Satan. Will God pick another man as He did David? O that He would pick me!" If your heart goes out toward God, He will choose you to-day. Just open your heart to receive Him and welcome Him, as you read these words. From the moment you believe you are chosen and the anointing is upon you, laughter is yours.

God passed over all the brothers. They had everything "on" David. The oldest brother was a man of great stature and handsome countenance; but Saul had been that kind of a man, and God had rejected Saul as His king. His proud heart had kept him out of the place of God's choice. Now the people were wanting a king, but it was God who was choosing this time, and not the people. God passed by Eliab, Abinadab, Shammah, and the others, and sent for the youngest, and they brought him in.

I know how he felt when he was anointed. I believe in the witness of the Spirit to our salvation. David had the Spirit of the Lord in him from that day. I am sure a man can know when he is chosen of God. God is giving salvation to anybody who will have it, and it all depends whether you will close or open up your heart to God. The condition of your heart, and your attitude toward Jesus Christ makes all the difference in the world. It is the difference between going down with the mass, and with the herd, and standing up, and having God come in and plant within you the uncreated life of His beloved Son.

All has been done *for* you, but all has not yet been done *in* you. If you will allow God to work in your heart, and acknowledge that there is something in-

finitely better for you, He will come in and anoint you as He did David, and you will certainly know it.

There is a song which runs, "I was there when it happened and I ought to know;" and David knew what had happened. If you do not know when you were saved, and the fact that you *were* really saved, there is a good opportunity, as you read these words, to get to know it, and to receive the witness of the Spirit of God.

The anointing of the Holy Spirit is a heavenly elixir; and it is said in the case of Jesus, that "He was anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows." If you are blue and long-faced, you had better come to Calvary. When you see that on the Cross the Lord Jesus Christ spilled His precious blood to set you free; that He *has* set you free, and you really believe it, His Spirit will come into your heart and witness to your salvation. I have had all kinds of joy, and have run the gamut of the world's pleasures, but I would not take anything in the world for the joy of the Lord that I possess. It does not come from my body, because ordinarily I ought to be exhausted on account of incessant traveling and preaching morning, afternoon, and night; my throat often gets tired, and my brain grows weary, but I never run out of this heavenly elixir. My old skin may get tired, but, oh, how He lifts! Oh, the joy of His salvation and the fullness of His life!

David was a picked man, a man upon whom the Spirit of God had been outpoured. God says: "I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground." Why not let the Lord sweep over you

and pour a flood of living water into your dry heart? You have not had a "Hallelujah!" in it for a long while; and you are drier than a dry husk of corn in October, rattling around in the autumn breezes, instead of having the joy of the Lord that is fresh and beautiful, clean and pure, bubbling up instead of being pumped up.

David was chosen, not because he was handsome, but because God saw that in his heart he was willing to open the door and let God have a "say-so" in his life. If you will open your heart Christ will come in, anoint you with the Holy Spirit, and pour floods upon the dry ground. We sometimes sing; in that song called "Showers of Blessing," "let some droppings fall on me." God does not like to send "droppings," He longs to send a great downpour, filling you with His life to overflowing. Not some exhilaration brought by a person moved by the Holy Spirit; the salvation I am preaching is about a Person, and when this salvation is real, this Person is revealed. It is not a doctrine, not a set of rules, it is a Person who died for us, who rose for us, who sits in the glory for us, who puts His Spirit in our hearts and causes us to walk in His statutes. It is not our struggle, it is not our striving, but the marvels of His undertaking. I was cast down and needy, but with a heart that was hungry for God; and He lifted me from the sinking sand of iniquity into the joy of His presence.

David could play upon the harp. The Christian life is not a humdrum affair if it is what God meant it to be. It is, of course, a serious life, and yet it is filled with joy and delight. David took his harp and

went in where a man was possessed of the devil, and he played until the darkness, and the demon, and the depression left the king. God gave the victory while David played.

You may not be able to play the harp, but there is a pipe-organ inside of you, that will roll out the melody of love, long-suffering, meekness, gentleness, and kindness. When God begins to play that organ, and draw the harmonies of the Spirit from your life, He will silence discords in your nature, exorcise the devil out of your heart, and vanquish sorrow and darkness. Paul and Silas were in a muddy jail, but God began to fill them with heavenly joy. Paul, with his froggy voice, and Silas with one worse, began to sing, and, oh, how the melody went forth! Out of the darkness and grime of that prison cell there floated the anthems of victory. Their feet were in shackles, but their souls were flooded with heavenly melody.

There have been men who, in the power of this anointing, have spent the whole night in prayer and praise, while the lions in the arena were roaring, hungrily waiting for the time when Nero and his cruel crowd, perched yonder in the amphitheater, would exult in seeing God's anointed ones thrown to the ravenous beasts and torn to pieces for Jesus' sake. Those men came from their prisons, walked out into the arena, frigid, white, scared? No, thank God. We have the record of their singing the praises of God as they went to the lions. Have you that kind of joy? I am determined to have the old-fashioned kind.

This old world has rolled on for many decades, and if Jesus tarries it will yet cost us something to be

Christians; but, if you have Christ, you have all things and abound, and no jail can hold a man who has the liberty that Jesus gives.

Ask a baseball star what he thinks of the crowd on the bleachers. He pays no attention to it. He runs with all his might, shoots up into the air and gets one with his left hand. The crowd grows wild. The next time he jumps six inches higher; but misses the ball by two inches, and the other team wins. He is nothing but a "boob" that day, although his effort has been superior to that of yesterday. He knows the fickleness of what men say; he estimates it at its proper value; and brushes past it to play his game. But of all the joys you can know, the greatest is to have Christ stand forth in your heart and tell the devil to leave, and then watch him go!

It is a joy for a man to win, and men laugh for gladness when the victory comes; but you will experience a laughter that comes from the bottom of your soul and that rises to glory, when Christ conquers in your heart and gives you the victory again and again. This Christ is infinitely more than things, He is bigger than all the old allurements, bigger than all your lusts, bigger than sin, bigger than hell, bigger than the devil and death. He has a Name which is above every name. Will you let this wonderful Christ, in all the fullness of His saving, sanctifying, and anointing power, come into your heart, and lead the heavenly choir as it sings truth, vision, hope, love, joy, and laughter in your soul? He has the oil ready, may he anoint you?

"Arise, anoint him, for this is he."

XI

THE MAN WITH THE SINGING HEART

"I will praise Thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart."—*Psalm 86: 12.*

The average Christian life is woefully lacking in praise to God. The kind of testimony we hear from many is this: "We are doing the best we can to hold out in our poor weak way; pray for us that we may be faithful to the end." I've tried a few times to start a prayer-meeting with a season of praise; and have asked the people not to *ask* God for a thing, but to praise Him. I've never made it go but once. Every other time somebody slipped, and while one person would praise the Lord, and another would begin all right, it would not be long before some one would say: "Then Lord, bless my children, give me—gi'me—gi'me—" they had to get that "Give me" in somewhere. Many of us are just "give-me" Christians. That is about all the Lord hears from us; and it must be very disappointing to the angels, to see people who have been privileged as we are, living without constant praise in their hearts to God. Jesus cleansed ten lepers, but only one returned to glorify God. It is an awful tragedy not to have a heart that is filled with praise, but to live on that low level where you are just simply trying to do the best you can. Life to many is simply one round of asking forgiveness, with no praise for any growth in grace and for any

fuller knowledge of God's wonderful redemptive plan.

Whenever a sinner sees the fact that salvation has already been provided; that God has already had mercy through the Cross at Calvary, he cannot but rejoice and praise God. The publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner," is not the prayer for one who is living on this side of Calvary, for the man who has really seen the Cross, has seen that God has had mercy and that His judgment is already passed to those who accept His Son. If you keep men praying the publican's prayer, they will be hunting around in their heart for feeling, to see if God has had mercy. He has already forgiven; and if you have sinned as a Christian, your business is not to ask God to forgive you but to confess your sins. He has declared, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The cookies are in the jar; just put in your hand and take one. God has already provided cleansing, and it is for us to bathe in the precious Blood which has already been spilt. Jesus died to put away sin for ever; He put it away at the Cross. Keep clean at the living laver of His precious Blood.

He said, on that last night, before His betrayal: "This is my Blood of the New Covenant." He made a Covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and He has never broken it. He made a Covenant with us when He died. Believe it, confess your sins, and gratefully accept His forgiveness and cleansing.

Those who see that their redemption is completed in Jesus Christ, have praise in their hearts. They cannot help praising for such a magnificent finished

work. I was born in Colorado, and have seen the sunrise from Pike's Peak many times. I have taken all the school-teachers who came from Missouri to visit us; pulled them up the Peak and led them down again. It is harder to get down with people than up. All you need to do in going up is to pull a little. But in coming down you have to hold them back, and they make you a bracer. I have never gone up there once and found the experience stale, even though I have taken up a big caravan of people. There was always a new view as we looked out, and it was always beautiful. We went up through the night, getting to the summit about two o'clock in the morning. Then we took a little nap, waiting for the sun to come up; it was always different, and always marvelous.

On one trip we were in a fog all night long, and on into the morning. The folks lay down to sleep covered with blankets and tarpaulins, while those of us who were accustomed to climbing watched, fearful that the clouds would keep the tourists from seeing the sunrise. Presently the atmosphere began to grow pink, then a deep red; and we noticed that the vapors were passing us, and we could feel a draft, as the vapors lifted from the valley. We told the folks to sit still, as they were going to see the prettiest thing they had ever seen. All of a sudden the fog lifted, and beneath it appeared a great view. The lights in the city of Colorado Springs shone forth miles below, with Pueblo on the south, and the prairies reaching out and out toward the east, a marvelous and wonderful panorama.

When the vapor lifted, the people could not say a

word, but they all murmured, "Oh—h—h—h." There was no need of anything else. You could not describe it. When you see the glories of the sunrise of the Son of God; out of the grave into the glory; out of the darkness and the blackness of sin into the brightness of His Father's Presence; you cannot describe what you see, but you will be able to say, "Oh, isn't it wonderful. Glory! Hallelujah!"

When a sinner sees the truth his heart says: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name. It is all done. I have not a care or a trouble." You cannot *make* people praise God, you must show them God's wonderful redemptive plan. The Holy Spirit is here to show us what God has done in Christ Jesus, and what Christ Jesus really is—He is the image of the invisible God. You dare not make unto you any graven image of God, for God had an image that He wanted to display. He presented Him to the world two thousand years ago, the image of God. Jesus Christ Himself. He said to Thomas: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." As you look at the image of God in Christ Jesus, all you can say is: "Oh, bless the Lord, I believe it!" Then the fog lifts, the smokiness of the air recedes, and you see a vision before you of Jesus Christ the transfigured presence of God.

It is the privilege of the Christian to live in the presence of Jesus Christ; and the Psalmist says: "I will praise Him with my whole heart." The sun has come up, there is a new day, a new creation; "old things have passed away, and behold all things have become new." My praise wells up because I see what

Jesus has accomplished, and I get away from my little struggles, and the things that are bothering me; I reckon the work done, and myself dead indeed unto sin and alive unto God.

We have a great deal of meaningless praise in these days. I heard one woman say she could go down a society line, shake hands with the women on the reception committee, and tell them something horrible had happened, and they would all say, "How perfectly charming!" Some folks praise with their lips, and that is all. You may tell them something great but it makes no impression on their superficial foamy lives. God does not deal in superficial language. He does not want people to say, "Praise the Lord!" so that it becomes a meaningless habit; a sort of spiritual society language. But when Jesus is made real in your heart by the Holy Spirit, you cannot keep your lips from praising Him.

I do not care what your burden is, nor what causes the tears that dim your eyes, if you will but look away from these things to Jesus, and be a real believer you will find rest and peace. The Bible calls Christians "believers." We may be called Christians, and I love the name; but the emphasis, in connection with that name is in danger of being put on some one who has simply joined the Church. I love to hear the believer say: "Trouble is coming, but I am a believer!"

My struggle is not to fight my troubles; but just to believe God; to be a believer. It is my faith that is being tested all the time. Do I believe that I am a new creation in Christ Jesus, when trouble comes? I believed it when I was thrilled with the joy of my

salvation, do I believe it when I am in trouble? Do I believe that the steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord? Most people like to say: "The Lord just leads a good man." O, no; He does more, He orders his steps. Sometimes He says: "Whoa there! Come out of that!" and He puts him in another place. I am in the hands of the Lord. Why should I fear since He is near? I live no longer in the realm of fear, and can praise the Lord with my whole heart because I believe what God says; and not what the devil says, or what unbelievers say. Praise comes from reality seen by faith.

You can never appreciate that wonderful hymn of Pastor Schmolke unless you know the story of it. If I remember rightly the circumstances were these. There was first a great conflagration, which swept over his entire parish, and burned the houses of most of his people. It burned his own church, if not his own parsonage. Then death came into his family and took away his wife and daughter. Then he was stricken by paralysis and laid on his bed so that he could not move. Blindness crept over his eyes, and there, his parish destroyed, his wife and daughter taken from him by death, himself blind and paralyzed, he wrote these words:

"My Jesus, as Thou wilt,
Oh, let Thy will be mine;
Into Thy hand of love
My all I now resign.
Through sorrow or through joy,
Conduct me as Thine own,
And help me still to say,
My Lord, Thy Will be done.

"My Jesus, as Thou wilt,
 Though seen through many a tear,
 Let not my star of hope
 Grow dim or disappear.
 Since Thou so oft hast wept
 And sorrowed all alone,
 If I must weep with Thee,
 My Lord, Thy Will be done.

"My Jesus, as Thou wilt,
 All shall be well with me;
 Each changing future scene
 I gladly trust to Thee.
 Straight to my home above,
 I calmly travel on;
 And say in life and death,
 My Lord, Thy Will be done."

Think of that German Pastor, when he could not see a star in the heaven, praying that his star of hope might not grow dim or disappear; when he could not move hand or foot, praying that he might be conducted as God's own, through each changing future scene, and affirming that he would travel straight on to the throne of God.

There is a praise that is willful praise, "*I will* praise the Lord." Why? Because on the ground of the promises of God He has announced certain plans; and whether I see their materialization or not, it is my business to believe that God is working out everything in my life for His glory. If you are a saved man or woman, God has called you according to His purpose and plan. You are a part of the Body of Christ. He has a purpose for that Body. Just as my body got up and went about its work this morning; so the Body of Jesus Christ is at work, and the Holy Spirit is

working in that Body for God's glory, and is doing a definite work. Do I ask my finger to wiggle? No, it is in my body, and I do not know how it is made to work, but my head commands it.

If you are willing to be subject to the Head of the Body, and recognize yourself as part of that Body, the Holy Spirit will direct the work. I have not to ask *why* He does certain things; it is none of my affair. Why should I praise the Lord? Because I have a Head that is doing the work, and I *will* to praise my blessed Head. I do not have to understand; for if I understood everything I should not need a Head. There is therefore no work that you can do that is so acceptable to God as praising Him at every turn of the road, and saying: "*What He does must be right.*" So Faber sings:

"I worship Thee, sweet Will of God,
And all Thy ways adore;
And every day I live I seem
To love Thee more and more.

"When obstacles and trials seem
Like prison walls to be,
I do the little I can do,
And leave the rest to Thee.

"I have no cares, O blessed Lord,
For all my cares are Thine;
I live in triumph, too, for Thou
Hast made Thy triumphs mine.

"Ill that He blesses is our good,
And unblessed good is ill;
And all is right that seems most wrong,
If it be His sweet Will.

"He only wins who sides with God,
To him no chance is lost;
His Will is sweetest to him when
It triumphs at his cost."

If I were to say, "I am going to wiggle my thumb," and it refused to wiggle, in what an embarrassing position I should be. Jesus ought to be able to put us wherever He wants to; so that every one will know that another life is working in us; that we are subject to Him, delighting in His will, and honoring Christ by our prompt and unquestioning obedience. When you are not dishonoring Him by your failure to obey, He can send you to Africa, to China, to India, to the slums, to any place at home or abroad, for His sake.

He says: "Him that honoreth me I will honor," and God wants the praise that comes to Him from a life that obeys its Head. Oh, that men would praise the Lord with the whole heart; and not keep back a little cupboard of fear and suspicion, but praise Him in spite of hell, circumstances, opposition, misunderstanding and gossip! I shall not be moved, for I am sold out to Him, and the knocks of others cannot hurt me; I am not afraid of them, "For no weapon that is formed against me can prosper; and every tongue that rises against me in judgment He will condemn."

Because He is enough, I am going to "boost" His stock. I pity the poor guy who works for a fellow, gets his living through him, and then "knocks" him. I pity the poor fellow who hasn't enough sense to "boost" the man he is working for. I would pity my own poor heart if I hadn't sense enough, after I had such a Jesus, to praise Him all the days of my life

with my whole heart. He is my life, my joy, my salvation, my health, my glory. Glory to God for such a Saviour!

Am I going with the false crowd that is always "knocking?" As a mission man said: "They are a bunch of 'Hittites.' Some have little hammers and some have long hammers, but they all have hammers." Shall I join the "Hittites"? Let's join instead the Chorus of Praise.

In the life of victory it is one of the hardest things to know when to speak out against men who are preaching another Gospel, and when to be silent. We are living in a day when we do not stand out for principles. We are not definite enough, nor are we separated unto Him as we should be, and unto the Gospel for which Christ came to die and shed His precious Blood. Yet it seems that a life filled with praise of Christ and to Christ and joy in Him will exalt Him more than trying to expose the hypocrites and the enemies of Christ. Praise is a powerful spiritual explosive from the mouth of a Spirit-filled saint, and defeats the enemy. We have tried to influence men by coming their way. Now let us stand like the brave, with our face to the foe, separated unto the Lord. Having done all, in these evil days let us stand, saying: "*I will praise God with my whole heart.*" It will not then be a question of "Give me—give me—give me," but out of our innermost being there will flow rivers of living, joyful praise to God. The burdens, the trials, and the testings will come; but, thank God, Jesus will be enough for them all. Will He? Indeed

He will. All right, let's praise Him. Learn to stand still and praise God in the hour of testing; for He knows how, at the right moment, to speak to the tempest, "Be still!" and there will be great calm.

XII

THE MAN WHO BELIEVES THE WORD OF THE LORD

"And the Word of the Lord came to him (Elijah)."

—*I Kings 17: 2.*

Wonderful is the coming of Springtime, with its glad bird-songs, and wild flower perfumes from the hills. Delicious is the smell of bursting buds and blooming orchids. But it means the putting in of the plow. It is just so with the coming of the Word of the Lord. The coming of that Word means refreshment and delight; new days and new knowledge; but it means also turning and overturning, seed-sowing and hoeing. The Word of God, when it comes, acts like Springtime, pulling you close to God as the sun pulls the earth; bringing you out of the cold lifelessness of winter into the warm producing season of spring. Remember, when it comes, if there is not plowing, and seed-sowing and hoeing, there will be weeds. Then the winter of judgment will find you without provision for its long cold days.

When the Word of God comes, it is sent by Him to be obeyed; and if it is obeyed great blessing always follows. If His Word is not obeyed, there begins what the man of literature would call Nemesis. That is, there springs up at once a force that makes for judgment. When a man has broken the law of God,

or disregarded the Word of God, seed is sown that when harvested, will be a deadly poison, shaped for that man's undoing.

The playwright and the novelist delight to weave their stories around the outworking of this principle of sin, or of disobedience, or of injustice. They love to follow the law of retribution; showing that as a man soweth so shall he also reap.

Here a plot starts. There are two children, and a fortune is left to them. One covets all and schemes to get all, and finally, by breaking every law of God, he succeeds. The "Word of the Lord" coming to such a one would say: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." By disobeying that word he does not allow his heart to be opened up like good soil, and be broken to receive the seed; consequently the weeds of judgment spring up, and inevitably come to a harvest. The novelist follows this character down the days and brings us to the period when these wrongly gotten riches eat like leprosy; and leave the man standing naked and undone in the biting blasts of God's judgment. When "the Word of God" comes to you, be sure you go to plowing and planting. In other words, humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. Let your heart soften in His presence. Let the tears come, if they will, to water the clods of your heart; and then plant the Word from the Lord deep within your heart, saying, "Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee."

The king before whom Elijah stood, and to whom he brought the Word of the Lord failed to do this; and Elijah pronounced God's judgment in these words:

"As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain, these years, but according to my word."

Elijah thus announced the coming harvest of weeds, and at once God withdrew him to a lonely place. God knew that Ahab in his rage, when the judgment broke upon him, would seek to destroy the man who had brought God's Word to him. Thus has it ever been with the prophets of God. How foolish of the wicked heart to think it can stay the judgment of God by putting to death the announcer of that judgment. It is just as if you were to run into a house that had just caught fire, warning the occupants that the house was in flames, only to have the whole family chase you up the street and beat you to death. Presently they return to their house only to find it burned to the ground. How silly and criminal the effort of trying to destroy the announcer instead of trying to stamp out the fire.

The critics of the Bible are of this breed. They do not like the announcement of hell. They despise the tidings of a soon-coming tribulation; of the judgment of nations and individuals; of the imminent coming of the Lord Jesus to the earth to take to Himself His great power and reign. They despise and reject any supernatural interference with the natural. Miracles, which are described in the Word of the Lord, nauseate them. They proceed—following, as they say, scientific methods—to put this Bible out of the way. At first they operated on its tongue and teeth, to keep it from speaking so plainly of the workings of God in supernatural power. Then they went a little lower in order to weaken its throat, that it might not put

force into its sayings. Then they dived to the heart, to take from it the work of the Cross of Christ and His atoning Blood. But this will not change the Word and edict of God which has gone forth.

Why do men think they can change the act of God by tearing the Word of the Lord to pieces? Any man who thus treated the proclamation of the United States in the late World War was considered a fool. In vain he ripped that proclamation to pieces before a crowd, and stamped on the Stars and Stripes. Did that stop the war? Nay, it went on to the end, and those poor fools got jailed and worse. The crowd knows such a man will get judgment, and they pity him for his idiotic acts. Our attitude toward the critics of the Bible of to-day is the same. God says: "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth, it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." No amount of criticism can change the announcement of God or destroy the announcer.

There is only one starting point for all progress, and that is faith in the unchangeableness of the Word of the Lord. This is the utterance of God: "God is not a man that He should lie; neither the Son of Man that He should repent; hath He said and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken and shall He not make it good?" All the thinking which builds upon this foundation will lead out of doubts into knowledge;

out of uncertainty into a clear realization of God, His will, and His ways. It will also lead men to forsake sin, assured that sin is inevitably followed by judgment. It will lead men to mind God, knowing that there is no escape from the punishment of disobedience; and that every transgression and disobedience will receive its just recompense of reward.

Ahab should have built on this foundation, but he preferred rather to play the fool and to lay the blame on Elijah. I love to hear God's prophets talk from their rock-ribbed pulpits of power, rooted and fixed in the never-changing "say-so" of God. Here is an inspiring dialogue between Elijah and Ahab: "And it came to pass when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, 'Art thou he that troubleth Israel?' And he answered, 'I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord.'" Any man is a trouble-maker in the church, in the nation, or in the home, when he has forsaken the commandment of the Lord.

Ahab was the leader of Israel. He had made the trouble. Now Elijah called for a final "show-down," between the sureness of the Word of the Lord and the man-made schemes of the false prophets. He cried, as we ought to cry to our generation: "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him."

There is a peculiar truth concerning the one who is able to say as Elijah did, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand;" and who dares to announce, as the result of that intimacy, the Word of the Lord. It is shown in this seventeenth chapter:

“Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith.” Here we see the banishment which is connected with wholly following the Word of the Lord. The saints who have pursued the pathway of full obedience to God have found all down these two thousand years—since the Saviour went away into the Glory—that loneliness is part of the price of uttering the Word of the Lord.

How Satan has tried to bind the lips in testimony by telling men that they will be misunderstood and left alone by their old friends if they dare to speak the Word of the Lord. I have known preachers by the score who will not testify in their own pulpits. They have allowed Satan to restrict their utterances. They have become wonderful in cold knowledge; but from saying out the things the Holy Spirit utters to the seeking heart, they draw back, afraid of criticism, desertion, and banishment, until the Holy Spirit speaks no more in the tender throbs of utterance. They are in a measure true to the Gospel; their doctrine is sound; but that bright glow which comes from the chamber of prayer; that manifestation of the Holy Spirit that melts hearts is theirs no longer. They thought it unbecoming for a dignified preacher to shed a tear in public. They thought it altogether beneath their exalted position to open their heart and confess to their hearers the weaknesses, compromises and mistakes to which the Holy Spirit had so faithfully called their attention in the secret place. The fresh, savory Word of the Lord they refused to pass on to the people, because Satan suggested that it would be casting pearls before swine. It would be so humbling. So they

drew back from such a ministry, and the One Who is meek and lowly in heart did not seem so close to them after that; their utterances grew dry and cold though they were the utterances of truth.

Yes, it costs something to give out the Word of the Lord. It means a trip to the brook Cherith. Have you pulled back from Cherith? "I love to go down to the Mission to preach," said a minister to me. "Why," I ventured to ask. "*Oh, it's free, down there,*" he replied. "That is a dangerous thing you have said," I answered. "You have said virtually that you draw back from letting your heart loose in your own pulpit because you would be misunderstood and criticised by your own people; and you dare not pay the price of the withdrawal of their approval. You love, however, to go where some fellow *has* paid the price, and picked a free field in the city. There you can frolic in freedom, uttering in a perfectly natural and excellent manner the Word of the Lord." It is because so many dare not face the trip to Cherith brook that their ministry has lost its glow and power.

You sit in your prayer-meeting. The time comes for you to pray. You fall in with the cold spirit about you, and utter your petitions in carefully selected terms, conscious every moment of the ears about you. You hear the Word of the Lord challenging you to pour out your heart before Him; but you draw back, promising to do that in your own room later on. You saw Cherith's loneliness ahead of you, and fearing, you drew back. Probably if you were talking to me just now, you would say: "I don't quite know what is the matter with me. I love the Lord. But I have

no joy like that I hear others have." Will you dare the next time, will you dare now, to give the testimony He asks you to give before friend or stranger? Will you dare to pray out your heart's cry, regardless of those about you? Then the waters of Cherith will become at once the sweetest you ever tasted.

Yes, there is a loneliness in going all the way with God as Elijah did, but He feeds you there in a way you have never been fed before. You will enjoy supernatural strength, which you never thought could come your way. The ravens God sent to Elijah at the brook Cherith brought "bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening."

It must have been a great experience to see the ravens stop their flight at the brook. This supernatural marvel must have given a wonderful relish to the food. The first great joys and experiences that come from wholly minding the Lord are often spectacular and romantic. But we must go a little farther down the road of humiliation if we intend to walk closely with God. With Elijah this experience of supernatural supplies ceased: "The brook dried up." Elijah was withholding rain at the command of God. To keep this Word, God must let the brook dry up. If we stand by the Word of the Lord, God will bring it to pass, and its very fulfillment will mean trouble for us.

Here is a couple who have prayed for their boy, standing on the promises of God. God answers by sending judgment to that young life. That judgment hurts the hearts of the father and mother. Their brook dries up. Will they ask God to remove His

hand? Will they step in and help the boy again? Will they in this way keep God from bringing the boy to the end of himself? Shall Elijah ask for rain now? No, God has another way. He sends him a little deeper humiliation. He said: "Get thee to Zarephath, for I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee." What a "come-down" for a mighty prophet like Elijah! If he is the messenger of God, why did not God command some one with plenty in that city to feed him? No, that would be up the road, and a rich man would get the glory. But the prophet must go down the road, and this widow woman possesses next to nothing. God loves to take the next-to-nothing and make more than enough out of it. Thus he blesses the widow, who let go all that she had; and shows his prophet that God can make a way where there is no way, and that He is not shut up to man's resources. God loves to prove that the path which seems lonely and forsaken is crowded with the angels of God. When once a saint has learned this widow-feeding plan of God's he can truly sing: "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want."

Are you afraid of this road to the widow's house? Then you know nothing of shouting in the empty flour-barrel. It is very humbling, this feeding at the widow's house—but, oh, it is soul-fattening, and produces great heart-freedom and liberty to the lips in testimony and prayer!

The widow had almost run out of meal. It was not God's desire for her that she should be so low; and it displeased Him greatly to think that she should eat what little was left and then look for death. There

was no faith here, and without faith it is impossible to please God. Hers was a sad state. Yes, and I find many in this state to-day, ready to throw up the whole thing and quit. They are up against it, and they say the way is too hard. They can see the bottom of the barrel every hour, but they cannot see God. I not only mean that many are having this experience financially, but spiritually. Do you want to know how to get out? Then look at the example of the widow, and mark, "the Word of the Lord to the widow," especially this last word, for it is the Word of God to you. Take it, plow and plant and hoe it now, or the weeds will come to harvest. Here is the Word of the Lord through Elijah: "*Make me a little cake first.*"

Now just look back. When the money came in, did you take God's portion out of it? Answer God now! When your talents were working, did you take God's part out first? In business, does God's call come first? Or is your answer: "I'm sorry, I can't do it; but my business is so pressing that it rushes the life out of me?" Answer God now, Mr. Business Man! Most business men in the church are useless to God, excepting as they send their check. You could not trust them with God's business. It would drag along from week to week, and end up in an awful mess. Yet that same business man, to whom God has given a task, would go wild if any man in business dared to say he did not attend to business. *He does attend to his own business*, but he has never yet obeyed when God said: "*Make Me a little cake first.*" His spiritual barrel is bare, and he wonders why. On the other hand, I have known of dear saints of God, greatly

blessed and greatly kept in His will. I have dug down to their testimony and have always run against this rule of God's little cake first. Oh, it is so little He asks! They have testified that this widow-woman's experience has been theirs: "And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah; and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to Word of the Lord which He spake by Elijah."

XIII

THE MAN IN THE NET

“Thou broughtest us into the net.”—*Psalm 6:11*.

This is a very queer text for a sermon on the life of victory; but if you will see the truth I wish to bring to you, you will discover that the way into freedom and victory is sometimes through a net. I want to take some examples that God Himself has used, to show how He brings us into victory. When I began to lead the singing I used to ask the congregation to say, “Hallelujah!” and to smile; but I found out there was something better than that. It was to call their attention to a little thing in a verse, and when they caught that they began to smile themselves. You might tell people to laugh, but one cannot laugh unless he sees something to laugh at.

You are perhaps like the old lady at the party. The crowd wanted to have fun, and they said, “Let’s play ‘faces.’” “How do you play ‘faces?’” some one asked. “Why, we all make the ugliest face we can make, and we have judges, and they go to decide who made the ugliest face, and give them the prize.” So they started to play the game, and after a time they came back and gave the prize to an old lady in the corner. To their amusement she looked up and said: “I was not playing!” They laughed, but she didn’t see what they saw.

You strive after victory, and wonder why you don't have it. You cannot get victory by striving any more than you strive after a laugh. You see something, and that makes you laugh, and in this matter you see a truth and that gives you victory. It is simply getting a vision of all that Jesus is to you that gives you victory.

My text seems, as I have said, a very queer one, but it reveals a secret passage into the life that is victory. It says: "*Thou broughtest us into the net*"—not, "we slipped accidentally and stumbled, and got into the net." God threw us into the net; and He let us stay in it until we were so tangled that we could not get out and had to cry to God, "Lord, we cannot get out!" Then He said: "I put you in there for a purpose, so that you would yell, 'I cannot get out!' and it was right in My plan and purpose to put you in that net."

In preaching to an audience some time ago, I said: "There wasn't a single scheme outside the salvation of Jesus Christ, and the program of Jesus Christ, that God had not tried and set aside. The grace of God in Christ Jesus, His death on the Cross, His resurrection and ascension, was the only scheme in the world that would work. A brother wrote me a letter and said: 'I cannot understand you. I don't see why in the world you could ever say that God tried a scheme, because God never fails.'" I had given three illustrations that very night to prove my point, but that man—a Bible student—sat there and never saw the thing at all. When I explained it to him again afterwards, he saw it.

He had never seen that God tries things openly before men, because He knows that they are to be a failure. He has to let men try their schemes and make an absolute failure of them. And then, when they get to the end of their schemes, they say: "Lord, I believe Your way is best after all."

If God was not proving other schemes a failure before the very eyes of men, there was no need for Jesus Christ to come into the world over nineteen hundred years ago. He ought to have been born when Cain was born, unless God was intending to show man that, by taking his own way, every scheme he could concoct to save himself was absolute foolishness. The only plan in the world that would bring success was for Jesus Christ to come in the flesh, "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

Jesus cried in the Garden: "Father, if there be any other way"—but there was no other way. Every other way—environment, eugenics, culture, leadership, government, law,—all had been tried. Jesus was the only way. God had to prove to man that he was a dead failure outside of God. God knew man was a failure outside of Himself; so do not think God is experimenting on you at all, and trying to prove something to Himself. He knows the end from the beginning.

The text says: "Thou broughtest us into the net." Some of you are in trouble to-day. God brought you there and you will never get victory in your life until you learn that He brought you there that you might lose all confidence in yourself and utterly depend on Him. I refuse to take anything from the devil any

more. Standing in the center of God's will I have learned to say: "Lord, the devil has nothing in me; I am Yours, all Yours; and whatever You allow is best for me."

You must enter into that Promised Land of Rest in Christ Jesus; where all your need is already provided. He will have to run you into net after net until you fully believe that there is rest nowhere else, but that having entered "no weapon that is formed against you shall prosper." You must believe that He is greater than nets, if you are ever to delight in His companionship.

Do you always understand God's dealings? There have been a thousand times when I could not understand, for the life of me, anything that was going on around me. I don't understand, but there is no reason why you should ask to understand if God is running the program. If you were running the program, you might ask, but if not, why not step into the Divine provisions and trust God?

The reason why you don't have joy is because you said you gave Him your life, *but you have not let Him run it*. Once in a while you have gone to the altar and said: "I surrender all," *and you have surrendered everything but the program*. He says: "You stay right where you are, and I will work my program out; opening doors or shutting doors, as seems best to Me." Is not that what He means when He speaks of Himself as He that "hath the key of David, He that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth and no man openeth?" Instead of recognizing this you have been irritated, and have fussed and fumed. You have

never looked like a comfortable sofa to anybody; or a nice restful field where the sheep were lying down, with the Shepherd leading them beside the still waters. Instead of this, people saw the unrest in your life, and said of your unlovely representation of the Christ-life: "I don't want it."

There is, however, a calm and sweet repose, a joy that Jesus gives. How does He give it? Right through this little door I am talking to you about. He brought you into the net, and instead, you have taken every last little burning that came your way as from the devil. When some one with a rough disposition sand-papered you, you cried to God, and said: "Please take that sand-paper away!" But He said: "My dear child, I can never polish you unless I use that sand-paper upon you." To polish you is to remove the angles and rough excrescences that so greatly mar the beauty of your life.

God put you into the net; and when you take the net from Him and say: "O God, I won't object to anything in my circumstances, my home surroundings, my business surroundings, I will take *everything* from Thee!" Then there isn't anything that can beat you; no power in earth or hell can harm you.

You will be like a friend of mine in Pittsburgh. One day his Irish boss who hated and despised him, said: "Look here, man, you are talking too much about Jesus and too little about business; I am going to fire you!" "Hallelujah!" said my friend, "I didn't know the Lord was going to take me out of this job so fast. Come on, let's go up to the office." "What are you talking about," the boss asked. "*You* couldn't

fire me," my friend answered. "If Jesus wants me out, He will put me out, but you are nobody—I have a big Jesus, and if He wants me out He will take me out all right, Hallelujah!" "You big fool!" the boss said, "Go back to your work!" "All right," my friend shouted, "I guess Jesus wants me here still!"

That is real victory, and that man never learned it by his Irish wit, but by simply trusting in Christ, and getting up before daybreak to tarry a little while in the Secret of His Presence. I never met him yet but He would say, "I was reading over in John or Isaiah, or Jeremiah." He was always "*reading over*," and finding out something new all the time about the beautiful program that Jesus had arranged for him.

You are waiting for some great big ship to come into port; you are waiting for some spectacular experience and think that is going to be victory. No, it is just taking the very thing that is rubbing you the wrong way, and saying: "Jesus, I take it from Thee; Thou hast planned for me and hast put me into this hard place, and Thou art bigger than all my hardships and testings."

I shall never forget that night in New York City when in that upper room, I took hold of the promise: "Casting all your care upon Him for He careth for you." There was a *Corticelli silk* electric sign in New York of a little kitten, with silk thread wound all around it; and whenever I saw it I pulled my hat down over my eyes; and the devil said: "Old boy, you are tied up like that kitten and you will never get out. I have tied you hand and foot, I have ruined you, and I have got you." I felt as if I was in a mill, like Sam-

son, grinding with my eyes out. The devil discouraged me completely. I didn't see any way of getting out, and yet I felt that somehow God had something for me to do. But the devil showed me my apparently helpless position, and the tangle and the mess I was in, and he would say: "Old Wobbler, you couldn't stick if you had to." And I had to admit that he was right. I could not stick. I constantly changed my course, and all the devil had to do was to point to my old path, to dishearten me.

But three days alone with God in a little room, a stone's throw from the Broadway sign, changed everything. When I came out of that room the tabby was still tangled, but I looked up and said: "Tabby, you are still tangled, but I am not. Thank God, I have triumphed in Christ."

All the devil has to do is to get you to look at your old nature, and then you say: "I cannot live this life, it is not for me." If you persist in looking at that, my friend, you will never get any victory. But when you say: "God has planned, through my blessed Saviour, such a complete and perfect life of victory for me, that it covers every part of my defeat; He has never left a thing undone that is necessary for me; and I will take Him, and His blessed indwelling life to carry me through." From that moment victory is yours. You don't have to worry, because God has the complete program. He knows where He wants you, and you can say: "Hallelujah! I am going through with Jesus!" Do you ask how about guidance? All you have to do is to be fully yielded. You cannot fail in God's plan if you are constantly yielded to Him.

He brings us into the net to show us that we could not run things; to show us that if we looked at the net there would always be a net. If we only look at the thing that ties us up we shall always be tied up. Some one says: "If I were situated in a home like yours, or lived in such and such a place; if my circumstances were changed a little bit, that is the kind of life I could live." You think so. I tried to help a young fellow once who began just like that. He said: "If I had another job, I could make good." I got him a job, and he held it for three weeks, and came to see me again. I said, "What is the matter?" He said, "That boss was the hardest fellow to work for I ever saw in my life."

I felt so sorry for him that I got him another job, which he kept about seven days. Then he telephoned me again and said: "I am working with such a crowd of men that I never seem to get along." I said to myself: "Old boy, you'll stick now, believe me." And I talked to him, and said, "I'm through." "Won't you lend me fifty cents," he asked. "No," I replied, "I'm through right now. You have to learn to stick, and if you go around to anybody else, I'm going to telephone them. You are going to stick and you are going through, believe me!" He is right there to-day.

He stuck in that last place, and I know he thanks God that I got off the business of helping him, and let him get into the net so that he would discover that it was nobody's fault but his own. He was a "knocker" from morning until night. Nobody was right, and everybody in the world had a chance but himself. The store was rotten, the boss was rotten,

everybody, but he, was favored; he was always looking for an ideal situation. But he is through with all that stuff. Why insult Christ by believing any longer that a net is bigger than He is?

The Children of Israel complained about Pharaoh saying, "He has told us to make bricks without straw!" They went to Moses saying: "You're only getting us into more trouble," all on the threshold of a mighty deliverance! But Moses went on with a strong hand, and God brought them out of Egypt, not by explosives or by arms, but He Himself led them out, just when they thought things were getting worse and worse and worse. He put them into a net. Were they murmuring against Moses? No, but against God.

God allowed that thing to come into your life. What for? That He might lead you out. If you would only keep still and trust Him He would take you out of Egypt, out of the Wilderness, into the Canaan Land of His full salvation.

The Israelites murmured against God, and He was working every minute for them. He brought them down to the Red Sea, and brought them into another net. There they were, the sea on one side, hills on the right and left, and the enemy behind. But after a while God did business, and then you ought to have seen the poets come up and start to write. When the old enemies were out in the stream, sinking like lead in the mighty waters, then they grabbed their timbrels and harps and began: "Then sang Moses and the Children of Israel this song unto the Lord." They had been murmuring and saying to Moses: "You got us

here, and now the army of Pharaoh has got us into a corner and we shall never get out." But Moses simply said: "Stand still and see the salvation of God!"

When the danger was over then they sang their songs: "I will sing unto the Lord for He hath triumphed gloriously." They became rhetorical, saying: "The Lord is my strength and my song, and He is become my salvation. My father's God, and I will exalt Him." (This sounds to me like Peter before the cock crew.) Then they went on: "The Lord is a Man of War; the Lord is His name. Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath He cast into the sea. His chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea. The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone. Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power. Thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed the enemy in pieces."

Then in three days from the time that they were shouting "Hallelujah!" on the bank, they ran up against another net; the need of a drink. They found a well and tasted of the water. They spit it back, and somebody else tasted it and spit it back, for it was bitter. Then they began to murmur and complain, and said: "O God, why hast Thou brought us out of Egypt into this thing? Here we are up against the bitter waters."

That path was God's path, right through the Red Sea and right up to the bitter waters. Here was their opportunity to say, "Hallelujah! This is another chance for the God who took us through the Red Sea to show His power." That is the way you ought to

live and you know it. He has never failed you; but you have failed Him a thousand times, and He has taken you and your failure, and covered it, and all your murmurings, with His precious Blood, and has brought you through, Praise His Name!

He put that bitter thing in their pathway to prove them. It was right in their path. And God lets the net come right in front of you that you may say: "Thank God, this is only another opportunity for Him to work." Yet there are some of you that are absolutely denying yourselves of the joy, the glory, of trusting Jesus. And you say it is because of your circumstances. If you expect to get to a time when the bitter waters and all these unfavorable circumstances will be out of your path, you will never find it. But you *can* find the life which is always victory, for His glorious indwelling will sweeten all the bitter waters to which you may be brought.

Do you ask, "How may I live this glorious life?" This is the way. When you come against the bitter waters you will be able to say: "Thank God, it is the right way; I take it from Thee, I know Thou art ordering my steps aright, I take everything from Thy wise and loving hand, and I trust Thee to make the bitter waters sweet."

His grace is sufficient. He took the bitter waters when He walked among us as a man, and now, living His life within us, He will still take these bitter waters and turn them into sweetness. Some one might have said, when He took the bitter cup that He drank to the last dregs, "That is the cup of death, and the devil has something to do with putting it to Thy lips." But

no, listen to Jesus, as He says: "*The cup that My Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?*"

Only reckon your way, your understanding, your plans, your wisdom, your very self, to be dead; and then take all from Him, for all things are yours. This life is not your life, it is His; it is not your yoke, it is His; and He says of this yoke, "My yoke is easy and My burden is light. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." The nets of which I have spoken only give you an opportunity to use His yoke to pull you through to victory.

XIV

THE MAN WHO WALKED ON THE WATER

"And Peter answered him and said: Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come to Thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water to go to Jesus."

—*Matthew 14: 28, 29.*

We have in this incident a remarkable picture of letting go and letting God. God's Word in dealing with a world covered with darkness and water—a world without form and void—was just one word "Let."

Think of all that this word "Let" means for the old earth on which we live. The earth produced its fruits, its flowers, its fish, its flesh of animals, and upon it flourishes the human race, because God said, "Let."

"Unto the darkness that covered the deep,
God said, 'Let there be light.'
Let Him now win that dark struggle within,
Let Him shine in on your night.

"Unto the water that covered the earth,
God said, 'Let them subside,'
Let go the flesh-life, its foam and its spray;
Live on the land that He dried.

"He cried to Lazarus, 'Come forth from the tomb'!
'Loose him,' he said. 'Let him go.'
Why will you stay in the grave-clothes to-day,
When victory now you may know."

The hardest task of the Christian's life is to come to such a place of surrender where he "lets go and lets God." In the natural, it is hard for the teacher to bring the pupil to the place where it will let itself be taught. Even with a baby some of you have found, that helpless though it seems, it is a difficult task to dress it. You have tried, have you not, to put a mitten on that little fist? Or to put that little arm into a sleeve? What a hard time God has in dressing us up in our heavenly clothes! He longs to bring us to the place where we allow Christ to be our very life, "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that according as it is written, he that glories, let him glory in the Lord."

How we struggle, and strive, and sweat, and strain to live the life that we see in Christ, when we have but to yield wholly to Him, and enter upon that life without the struggle, the striving or the straining! He does the living of that life by the Holy Spirit in our hearts. Oh, that men would "let go and let God!"

You say to me: "Give us some enthusiastic commands; let us arise in our places with our jaws set in resolution, and we will go forth from this place to copy Christ more closely." Ah, dear heart, I cannot. You cannot live this life by copying. He must live it in you.

I know that to the rationally-minded my statements are but foolishness. Your doctrine would be: "Where there's a will there's a way." "Get busy!" "Attain!" "Make good!" "Put your shoulder to the wheel!" All this teaching stresses the flesh, but all flesh-effort

is utter failure before God. It is only the propping-up of the thing that is cursed, and is an absolute failure before God. It is as awful as to pick up a dead man's hands and wave them in imitation of the actions of a live man. The old Adam in us cannot please God. God is only pleased when we reckon the old Adam dead through the death Jesus died for sin on the Cross of Calvary. The new Adam Who is Jesus, is to be our all. And we are to reckon ourselves alive with Him, and to give Him, and His blessed Holy Spirit, full right of way. He has provided life for us, not to copy, but to receive. Let go and let God's life have its way.

Yes, it seems foolish to the world to let go. But to those who have let go, God has revealed Himself as the God all-sufficient. You notice that when Peter stepped out to walk with the Lord on the water, there was no natural footing; there was no place in the natural for him to stand. Yet Peter stood when he stepped out and walked on the water, until he began to look for a natural footing.

There is never a natural, but always a supernatural footing when souls step out to walk with the Lord. You say it is not practical. You are mistaken, it is very practical. It held Peter up, and he walked on it, but his footing vanished when his hands tried to grasp after it; when his brain tried to figure it out; and when his reason ran around for something to rest on. Walking with God has a very practical footing, but it does not depend upon reason but upon faith in Him, for He is the footing.

Abraham was called out of his own country to walk

in a land he knew nothing of. He became a stranger in the land which God gave him. He was willing thus to step out where there was no natural way out. This was faith. Abraham is called "the father of the faithful." He let go of the things seen for the things of God, still unseen. God promised him children in multitudes, and allowed him to go on believing for these promised children until he was an old man, stricken in years, and his wife an old woman.

There was no natural hope for a son in the home of Abraham. But he believed God; he "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that what God had promised He was able also to perform." "Under utterly hopeless circumstances he hopefully believed"; and in Sarah's old age she brought forth Isaac. God had promised that through Isaac the nations of the world should be blessed. We all know that God has brought Jesus, born of a woman, in the line of Isaac, and that God has kept His promise about the seed of Abraham, which is Christ.

He will yet come to the earth as King of the Children of Israel, and be the blessing of the nations of the earth. All the promises that God made to Abraham—although Abraham saw no natural footing for them—will come to pass. Some of the promises have already been fulfilled, and the time is rapidly approaching for the fulfilment of the rest of them.

The signs are many and are very clear that the Jew is soon to look upon Him whom he has pierced; just as Joseph's brethren looked upon him whom they had put in the pit. Just as Joseph had royal help for his

brethren, so Christ is coming with Almighty help for His brethren as He promised to Abraham. Can you not let go, and let the God of Abraham undertake for *you*.

Moses was called out into service for God. He was to be sent forth to deliver the Children of Israel, according to God's promise; but when God called him to this great task He did not take him to Sinai, and show him His great power and might; nor did He turn loose the whirlwind or the thunders and lightnings to show Moses His Almightyness. He did not take him to a river and prove that He could make its waters divide, nor explain how He could do it. He did not let him into the secret of manna-making. He did show him some things that, even though he saw them, were still a great mystery. How could the burning bush be explained? Yet God showed him this. Where was the natural footing in the rod that became a serpent? Where was any basis for reason in the hand that instantly became the hand of a leper? He stood in the presence of the supernatural with his shoes off his feet, and consented to walk on the supernatural and in the supernatural. To walk in the presence of the "I AM" was the decision of Moses.

What is your decision? He went up against the enemy and enslaver of his people in the supernatural. Will you let go and take that way also? Dare you trust all to the One Who gave all for you? O glorious walk! O walk of rest with Thee, Blessed Lord Jesus! Enter now into this life in the Spirit, beloved. He woos you gently to this hallowed walk of faith in Himself. Say "Yes" to His pleading.

Interpret your very failure and hunger for victory in your life as His blessed calling to you to step wholly apart from all else, and rest wholly in Him.

The widow's need in Elisha's day led to the filled vessels. She did not tell the world her need, her tight place of want; but she took it to God's prophet. Have you complained and murmured and spilled over, until the home folks, and maybe the town folks, realize your great lack of victory? Why not take it to Him alone? Why longer disgrace the One whose name you bear, and to Whose sway you will not yield? Why not let go your own way and let Him have His way? He is all you need, and just what you need.

He met the widow's need and filled every vessel her sons brought. He will meet yours. Will you bring him the vessels out of which you have emptied all your own methods of meeting your needs; all the natural ways of working things out; all the natural footings removed, and come, completely emptied, to the great supernatural gift of God through Jesus, who will fill you with the blessed Holy Spirit? You do not have to struggle to receive Him. Your only struggle will be in self-emptying, because you are going to receive Him in place of yourself. But you cannot even conquer self. You can only, by your yielding, turn the whole struggle over to the Holy Spirit. He alone can dethrone self. Your work is to reckon the flesh and the self-life dead with Jesus on the Cross. This faith-reckoning empties the vessels; and faith, reckoning on the all-conquering life of the Holy Spirit within you, will fill the vessels. There was no natural footing for the widow, she turned every-

thing over to the supernatural. She shut herself in with God, and He worked until every vessel was filled. Her debts were paid and enough was left for her and her children to live on. Oh, take enough, for He is enough!

With Peter, what was the attraction? Why did Abraham step out? Why did Moses consent? Why dare a man "let go and let God?" *First*, because of what He has worked out for us on the Cross. Since He has worked it out *for* us, the Spirit works *with* us, until we allow Him to work it out *in* us. When we see that the precious Blood, flowing from the Cross, pays our debt to the uttermost farthing, we cannot but love our Saviour, and that wonderful love that took Him to death breaks our stubborn will. O the wonders of the work at Calvary!

A wealthy judge in the South argued frequently with an old Methodist preacher about the Atonement. His argument was that he did not need Jesus to pay anything. He thought, since he was of good family, and had lived a good life before his neighbors, and had paid his debts and told the truth, and was noted for his mercy and justice, that he was already saved. The faithful old preacher talked very plainly with him but to no avail. He also talked to his son, but the father had trained the son as his father had trained him; and he did not care to have the minister get the notion into the boy's head that his soul was in any kind of danger.

The boy had a high temper, like his father, and high spirits. One night, in a secret den of the city, the son was drinking, and in a fit of jealousy planned a ride

for a rival in a love affair. At the edge of the city a shot was fired; and the body of his rival was thrown from the carriage. The girl in the case, who was riding with them, loved the rival, and turned her hatred on the judge's son. In his anger he shot her dead. They caught him in another town. Down came the famous family-name; the judge's head was bowed in shame and disgrace; and his proud heart was overwhelmed with grief. In his agony and anguish of soul he called for the old minister, "Only Blood, pure, spotless Blood, the Blood of the Son of God, will pay," said the broken-hearted judge: "Go, and tell my son of Jesus' Blood!" The minister went. Oh, this is the attraction: "While we were yet sinners, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." Surely we can "let go and let God," when He calls. He is calling now, will you not let go?

Second—because of the place He occupies right now. He is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high. He is in the place of absolute power: "Far above all principality and power and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." Can you not let Him take control? Yes, you can. His is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever. Let the government be upon His shoulder. "Let go and let God."

Third—because He has so much to give. Rev. F. E. Marsh, in going over the Bible, finds "My" before all these things that I will name. They are all His, and yet they are all for us: "My body," "My

blood," "My life," "My flesh," "My hands," "My feet," "My word," "My Father," "My rest," "My Spirit," "My commandments," "My voice," "My joy," "My name," "My grace," "My power," "My love," "My peace," "My glory."

Is not this attraction enough to induce you to leave the struggle and strain of *your* "my," and take all that He gives in *His* "My?"

Fourth—because this is all to be in us. It is not only in glory, *but here and now*, in our hearts He wants to fill His temple with all these heavenly furnishings. Oh, wait before Him until the fire falls. Your given-up self is but a wick dropped into Himself, the oil. You are in Him and He is in you, and He will let the fire fall to make of you a flame for himself and others. If you are wholly His wick He will light you, but remember it is the burning oil of His holy presence which alone gives the light. Learn to rest quietly in Him and He will tend the flame.

Fifth—the great attraction is His saying to us, as He said to Peter, "Come!"

"He drew me and I followed on

Charmed to confess the voice Divine."

Oh, hear His call, and let Him hear you telling Him now, that you dare leave your little boat and stand out where He is standing. The waves may roar, the flesh may howl, but here is your security. He is walking now on the very waves that threaten you with destruction. They are under His feet. He walked on them before he asked you out of the boat of self.

If you trust Him they will be under your feet too. You are not to be holding them down or suppressing them. Bless God, He is riding on them, they are under His feet, and I am walking in victory with Him! It is not my victory; it is His. He is the great attraction, therefore I can let go and let Him hold me up, a victor in Him.

Sixth—I am sure that *He*, who is walking on the water, will not go down, and that He will bring me through. Peter stepped out of the boat, and walked on the water, then he began to sink, but Jesus stretched forth his hand and held him. He will pull you through. You can afford, therefore, to "let go and let God." Abraham got tangled up in Egypt; but God finally got him to Mount Moriah, and to the place where he withheld nothing from God; not even Isaac, his only son.

Moses was a murderer; then he went to be disciplined in the back-side of the desert. In a day when God was greatly using him he failed to give God the glory, and was not allowed to go into Canaan. God took him off alone and buried him, and no man knew where his body was laid. But God wonderfully pulled him through, for on the Mount of Transfiguration who should be there as the honored guest but this same Moses, not Joshua. He entered the land after all.

Beloved, it is all grace. Let him take you just as you are and He will take you through. Is it not a great enough attraction to step out on His Word, and to know that He will do the fighting, and the winning, and finally land you in glory with a crown of victory

on your brow? Yes, He will. Will you not then "let go, and let God?"

Seventh—What greater attraction, on the top of all these things, could we have to let go everything and to let God do everything, than the glad attraction of His coming? O that glorious event! It stirs my soul like martial music! Come quickly, Lord Jesus! What if He were to come to-morrow, and you knew that He was coming? Would you not "let go?" Well, He *is* coming; in such an hour as ye think not He will come; and He wants His Bride to be ready for that hour. Yes, ready, and watching, and waiting. Oh, "let go and let God!"

XV

THE MAN WHO CAME BACK FROM THE DEAD

"Then Jesus six days before the Passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead."—*John* 12:1.

God calls Himself not a force, not a power, not an influence, but "the Living God." He has shown Himself in three ways at least. Through creation, through conscience, and through the revelation of His Spirit to ours. The three people mentioned in this chapter, Martha, and Mary, and Lazarus, illustrate these three revelations. Martha, the realm of creation, Mary the realm of conscience, and Lazarus the realm of spirit.

Man is a tripartite being, consisting of spirit, soul, and body. The five senses connected with our bodies are so constructed that they take in all the impressions of the created world; and the power of intelligence, at the center of the brain, turns these impressions into ideas. We feel iron. We get an impression. We feel cloth. We get an impression, and the two impressions taken together give us an idea of difference. We give names to these different ideas.

Thus to our intelligence can be revealed a whole ordered world; and we stand amazed at the beauty and grandeur of the revealed creation. We can dis-

cover its laws, and know how to make an adjustment and ordering of our lives according to those laws. This ordering and regulating and adjusting constitutes the process of living. We can go farther, and get the highest possible living, with the joy which results, out of this regulating, combining and adjusting.

How dead must be that soul that cannot feel the joy of the coming and going of the seasons; the ebb and flow of the tide! How exhilarating are the feelings that come to the sailor as his ship mounts the waves and rides upon the billows, while the wind fills the sails of his vessel, as he regulates the ship to the wind and uses its power to carry him onward! How delicious the salt spray, as it dashes on his tanned and bearded face! What joy there is to him in this revelation of an unseen power that holds his vessel above the deep where it can catch the breeze and sail on.

The regulation of trunk, branches, and twigs; the coming of definitely-shaped leaves; the bursting forth of blossoms; the ripening into fruit and harvest, all speak of a fine order and fitness within the keeping of some unseen hand.

The mountain peaks, with their snow-capped summits; the storage of the summer's water, dispersed by means of the sun's rays to a waiting valley below, tell the story of a fine conservatism, of the wise planning of an unseen Intelligence.

The music of the song birds turns the gloom into brightness and reveals the shadings of emotion that gladden the heart of man. Here is the manifestation of a Hand that, with fine adjustment, can adapt the

sound to the ear and open the tender doors to the emotions.

Martha lived in this realm, the realm of order, arrangement and fitness. She kept an ordered house. No dust was on her mantel, if she had one. The breakfast bell rang at the ordered hour, and Lazarus and Mary heard about it if they didn't show up at once. Lazarus knew there was water for his feet and a place for his sandals just outside the door, and he didn't dare step on the new rug that Martha had made and placed at the entrance until the foot business had been attended to. It was a regulated home. I am not objecting to regulation. Why, no, bless you! The failures I see around me are mostly because folks have never learned to do things when they should be done, or to come when they are called. I know preachers that are failures, not because they are not bright and intelligent, but because they can't divide their day and regulate it, and do things on time; and they imagine they are overworked.

Oh, the wrecked lives of young men and women who try to make a living, and cannot do it, because they have never learned to do anything on time and to keep things in order!

Jesus did not condemn Martha for the part she had, but He told her that Mary had found a better part, and He would not ask Mary to come down to a revelation through order, when she had come to the revelation through conscience, and soul.

Mary saw all that Martha saw and *then* some. Mary could serve as well as Martha and *then* some. She could serve in Martha's realm and in a higher

realm also. She not only saw fitness, but she had time to sit and talk with the Christ who had created and fitted together all the delicate parts of creation. Martha had no time for this. She was specializing in order and regularity, and she had no time to talk with the One who orders the planets in their courses, and regulates the time of their return. Mary had time to sit and talk to Him Who in the beginning was with God; Who made all things; and without Whom was not anything made that was made.

Mary had seen beyond the hand that wrought the wonders to the wonderful One Himself. Oh, that you would arise to-day and say: "His ways are wonderful, but I must know the wonderful One!" Martha saw duty and doing; Mary saw this also, but she saw her undoing because of sin, and His death because of it. Martha could set the table. So could Mary, but she could sit and see Jesus preparing a glorious feast for humanity through His death and resurrection; and she anointed Him with the costly spikenard for this reason, as Jesus Himself said: "Against the day of My burying hath she kept this."

Mary was walking in the realm of life, where its eternal issues could be impressed upon her. Her five senses were open to the impressions of the outside world as well as Martha's; but the senses of her soul and her conscience were also open to the revelations that are eternal, and that have to do with the soul's destiny. Like all truly saved souls, Mary had seen what the awfulness of sin was. Dirt was awful to Martha, so it was to Mary; but the sin that Mary

saw was worse, and Jesus was its wonderful cure. Martha saw that things must be taken care of and regulated, or they would spoil. Mary saw this also, and she saw the souls that were spoiled by sin and that were marked for death.

Mary saw the earth that Martha saw, but she saw the world as Martha did not see it; she saw it as Jesus saw it; lost and undone because of sin.

Mary now saw misery, poverty, crime, filth, fashion, blindness, suffering and death. She saw that sin had marred every beautiful thing, and that Jesus had come to handle the sin-question, through the Cross and the victory over death. She saw a new world, a new race, everything created anew in Him. She saw Him the Last Adam, as the Head of a new race. She saw that He was life, and could give that life to others; yes, to all others who would only believe. Her soul was awake and open. Sin had been dealt with in her life, and Jesus was both her Saviour and Lord. To her there was no music like the music of His name, and no joys like the wonderful joys of this new creation. Her conscience had found peace, and order, and cleansing from the defilement of sin. What a revelation! Mary could sing:

“Thou dear Redeemer, dying Lamb,
I love to hear of Thee;
No music's like Thy charming name,
Nor half so sweet can be.

“My Jesus shall be still my theme,
While in this world I stay;
I'll sing my Jesus' lovely Name,
When all things else decay.”

Lazarus was living a life direct from the revelation of Jesus, as life. He had died. He was alive again because Jesus was life. His death and his coming back to a new life gave all the glory to Jesus. He was the very life of Lazarus. Death had separated him unto Jesus. He is a type of the soul that has come to the crisis of his Christian life, where he sees that Jesus is his life, his victory, his wisdom, his righteousness, his sanctification, and his redemption. He identifies himself with Christ in death on the Cross; and he counts that hateful self dead and stinking, as he himself once was. Thus the Christian says of his own free will: "Farewell to the self-life." He reckons it dead through the dying of Christ, and rises in Christ, to live in Him, and by Him, and for Him.

It is at such a crisis hour, of reckoning death to self and because of such a reckoning of faith, and such a consenting to turn over self to death in union with Christ, that the Holy Spirit can come in His fullness to work out *in* us all that Christ has worked out *for* us on Calvary. Here is the Scripture for this reckoning: "For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:7-11).

Lazarus had no place to lean upon but Jesus. Some one might have said: "Martha is a good cook, Lazarus; you'd better keep in with her, and do all she

tells you to do, or you'll be sorry." Lazarus could reply: "Sure, she's a good cook, but her cooking could not save me. Jesus raised me. I'll eat; but I'll eat to His glory, not Martha's." His friends might have said: "Be careful, Lazarus; don't talk too much about this raised life of yours. Mary and Martha might not exactly understand it, and your friends might think you strange." "Bless your dear heart," Lazarus could have said, "I am strange, awfully strange, wonderfully strange. Jesus gave me victory over the old Lazarus, that was sick and dead and stinking."

"Strange? Say, this new life, the life that only Jesus can give, cannot be held under cover! I know it's shocking to Martha, because she expects to live, from the way she puts herself up, just like preserves. So much of this, and so much of that, well-stirred and then canned up for eternity. No, I'm walking with His life, not mine. This life that you see is His work. I'm not ashamed of it. Mary may think I go a little too far sometimes, and wonders why I always rejoice, but, when you know it's just Jesus only, the very dust, the trees and rocks, have voices that cry out 'He made us too!' Don't try to get me back into my old self again. I am in Him. It's not simply what he has done, but, oh, it's the fact that I have found Him to be my very life." Thus Lazarus preached a sermon every time he walked down the street from the text "For me to live is Christ."

"Perfect love casteth out all fear." That motto verse was hung across the face of Lazarus, before all who looked at him. Some group might have visited him and said: "Now, Lazarus, we love you, and we

think you are taking your life in your hands if you go up to that great feast. They hate the One Who raised you, and they are seeking to kill Him. Your testimony among them will only raise the devil in them and cause a great argument. Now, in the interests of peace, Lazarus, you had better stay at home and let people come to see you in the natural course of events."

"Stop!" Lazarus would shout. "Do you fellows suppose you can scare me, or that that mob of Jews can get me to run or to shut my mouth? No, men, you forget that death has no sting for me. I've been there and have come back again. Get out of my way! I must go and tell them of Jesus the Life."

There is something in the boldness and assurance of a sanctified person that lets you know they are in the Limited Express, running on the main track, and intend to go right through on schedule time. The world knows the whistle, and can tell ahead just what course these people will take. They know perfectly well that they are not stopping at all the world's side-tracks; nor stopping at the water-tanks, but they take their refreshing waters from the middle of the track as they are on the go.

Unsanctified men and women are always leaning on something else than on Jesus alone. This is why an unsanctified preacher cannot get people straightened out and fed with corn. He has his own leaning places, his own reservations, and compromises and excuses for lack of victory. He never wants to take the Bible as a whole, because if he does it will be a knife to give self an awful stab. He doesn't want to believe

in Christ's bodily return to this poor, disordered world; because that leaves no sop to the flesh to shout over a redeemed world with those who are seeking to bring in a millennium by social service, "*We did it!*" Such a man's hope is still in men, in institutions and methods, and machinery.

Look at the rich men of our day as they give. Their leaning is to the flesh. Show them a great building, dishes rattling, elevators running, moving-picture apparatus installed, classes in this, classes in that, and organizations for uplift, humming with activity, and they will throw in heavy gifts, even to hundreds of thousands of dollars.

How many souls are saved as the result of all this hum? They don't know. Those who do know won't say, because they don't want you to boil it down to its real value from the standpoint of the thing that Christ came to do, namely, make Christ-filled men out of dead ones. I can show you little missions where many souls have found the light, struggling away with only a bare living coming in. What an opportunity to get in behind something that is doing business, as Christ ordered it to be done! Here is a chance for real investment for Jesus. But, no, the flesh calls too loudly. They can't give anything big there. It would be too much to invest on giving men eternal life. This natural life is much closer, they think.

"No, Lazarus," they would say, "we'll go and get Martha to give the girls lessons in bed-making and bread-making, and build a big institution for girls to become good cooks and housekeepers." All of which is fine, and should be done, if you are not

substituting it for being born again from above, and real salvation.

That is just what is behind this modern mad rush for social service. Men do not want to stand behind the Old Gospel, but want to push something that wins the approval, and gets the money out of the philanthropic and worldly man. You might almost call their motto, "Make this world heaven." But you had just as well try to make this world heaven, without the salvation of Jesus Christ, as try to raise Lazarus without Jesus, when he was in that stinking sepulcher. Jesus, and Jesus only, can do that business, my dear brother, and you had better come into the risen experience where Lazarus lived, and make Jesus your whole song and story.

Not the methods of men, but only the voice of Jesus can make men walk in newness of life as Lazarus walked. O God, give us more men and women, whose very presence among us is a testimony of Jesus only! Let the Holy Spirit cut you free this day from your leaning-places, and your confidence in the flesh; and put your soul's center in Jesus only. Jesus risen, Jesus exalted, Jesus seated at God's right hand, and coming back again.

Lazarus could sing this hymn, I wonder could you?

"My God, my Portion and my Love,
My everlasting all;
I've none but thee in heaven above,
Or on this earthly ball.

"What empty things are all the skies,
And this inferior clod;
There's nothing here deserves my joys,
There's nothing like my God.

"To thee I owe my wealth and friends,
My health and safe abode;
Thanks to Thy name for meaner things,
But they are not my God."

Surely Lazarus walked on holy ground. He knew that people gazed at him, and that he was considered peculiar. This is the experience from which so many draw back, in this wonderful life of full salvation and abiding. They cannot stand the caustic remarks of those who lean toward the world; their pride is too much alive. But God wants a peculiar people in the sense of being willing to be the gazing-stock of men. It is His best advertisement. He will save all who trust in Him. But it is only a small crowd to-day who want His Son to be revealed in them; only a small crowd who are willing to be the showcase of Jesus, in whom He can reveal His lovely character. If we decide to become His exhibits, it is good-by to self, and, praise God, no man has yet fathomed the wonders that Jesus can display in an empty showcase.

Oh, get this experience! Banishment will be glory if He is there with us. The world's scoff will be music to our ears if we are scoffed at for Him. Peculiar? Yes, that is a peculiar life in a world where the first law of life is self-preservation; but the one who knows the Risen life knows what Jesus meant when He said: "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for My sake shall keep it unto life eternal."

Only get to know the secret of this risen life; then you can sing with Madame Guyon:

"My Lord, how full of sweet content,
I pass my years of banishment!
Where'er I dwell, I dwell with Thee,
In heaven, in earth, or on the sea.

"To me remains nor time, nor place,
My country is in every clime:
I can be calm and free from care,
On any shore, since God is there.

"While place we seek, or place we shun,
The soul finds happiness in none;
But with a God to guide our way,
'Tis equal joy to go or stay.

"Could I be cast where Thou art not,
That were indeed a dreadful lot;
But regions none remote I call,
Secure of finding God in all."

XVI

THE MAN WHO WANTED A MOUNTAIN

"Lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me; as my strength was then, even so is my strength now; for war, both to go out, and to come in. Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day."—*Joshua* 14:9-12.

This is the story of a man who wholly followed the Lord. Caleb and Joshua and ten other men went up into the land to spy it out, and they came back delighted. Their hearts were filled with joy and with praise to God in providing so wonderful a land. They said: "It flows with milk and honey, and we have brought back some of the grapes from Eschol."

I believe Joshua and Caleb were the men who carried that big bunch of grapes; and I think they set it down a few times, and took a grape apiece and said: "It tastes so good we will never go back on this country." The only people who really hunger for their inheritance from God are the folks who have tasted a few of the grapes ahead of time, and when they have had a little taste of them you cannot drive them away.

I once had a little pup who turned into a "yaller dog," as ravenous a dog as ever you saw. I went out with a lovely sandwich one day, and he came smelling around and I gave him a piece of it and

he swallowed the piece. I stood looking over a fence kind of dreamily, and the first thing I knew he was smacking his lips looking up for more; he had swallowed the whole sandwich while I was dreaming.

Whenever a person sees that God has a way, that He has a method, that He provides, and is eager that we enter into the good works before ordained for us; when they see that He has a marvelous program, that it is all mapped out; and that it is our business to believe God and enter in—when once a person has caught a whiff of this life, I say he is never satisfied to go back to any sort of fleshly effort.

I don't know what you may think, but it seems to me that as truly as God prepared an inheritance for the children of Israel he has prepared this lot for us. You can say what you please, but I haven't a bit more sense than to believe it.

Suppose a man has a rich father; the father dies and leaves his fortune to his son, is the son going to work out his living? No, he works out his inheritance; the salvation that the father has prepared ahead of time so that he won't have to work. Hence the verse that says: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" might be made to read, "Work out your inheritance with fear and trembling." What does the boy to whom the inheritance has been bequeathed do? He goes to court, has the will probated, and sees to it that what his father has left him he gets. The way for you to work out your salvation is just this: when God has provided it in Jesus Christ, all you have to do is walk up to the devil and say: "I am going to have it and you cannot

hold it back." By faith we possess our possessions. We plant our feet on all that Jesus has bought for us, and we never move until it is ours.

If God has provided a life of victory in the Holy Spirit you don't have to work for it; it isn't your struggle. What is your business? To say to the devil and all his hosts of wicked spirits: "God, through His precious Son, has provided this life for me, and I dare to take it against every intruder, and against all the onslaughts of the enemy. I take, and thank God, He undertakes."

This is the way God works for us. We cannot work it out as a man might take a piece of marble, and with his chisel and mallet work at it until he carves something out. God never intended that we should carve ourselves a career in this way. He intended that He Himself should do the planning; He would carve something out, and then lay it before His people and say to them: "Now, will you accept this by faith? Will you lay hold of the promises of God and trust Him?"

Look at the thing that confronts these people as they reach Kadesh-Barnea, ready to enter into Canaan land! The ten spies came back and said: "There are giants; there are strong fenced cities; their walls reach to heaven, and we shall never get over them. We can never get around the giants, we looked like grasshoppers in their eyes. It is a hard land to take, and we can never do it. Truly it flows with milk and honey, and has all sorts of luscious fruits, but we cannot take it."

I would like to know upon what kind of a basis

they started that kind of reasoning. What right had they to look at the giants? What right had they to look at the high walls, or the fenced cities, or at any kind of obstacle? Let me ask them a question, as the ten spies come up before the people. "Now, men, Caleb and Joshua believe God; they say: 'We are well able to go up and possess this land': why don't you believe him?"

"But the giants are there, the men of great stature, who made us look so small. The fenced cities are there, and it is too great an undertaking. Far better for us to make a captain and return to Egypt."

"All right, let me ask you a question: 'Was the Egyptian deliverance a great undertaking? There were six hundred thousand men of you, besides women and children, who were in slavery in the Land of Egypt, with the whips of the taskmasters on your backs. You could not say your souls were your own. You were making bricks without straw. Your loved ones were oppressed, and your wives and families in slavery. Is it not a fact that a few months ago six hundred thousand of you were in cruel bondage to Pharaoh? What did you use, to escape from his power, in the way of shrapnel and guns? How did you ever come out from under the oppression of a monarch like Pharaoh? Yet every chick and child among you walked out with bracelets and earrings and gold and jewels of all kinds, with abundant provisions. How did you walk out? Did you free yourselves?' "

"Well, no, we didn't." "Then how did you get out?" "God let us out." "What was the simple

method He used to let you out?" "We slew a lamb and put the blood on the lintel and door-post of our houses." I might laugh and say: "That was a silly thing to do, was it not?" "Yes, but it worked. The angel of death went through that land and the first-born child in every home died, from the palace to the dungeon, and even the first-born of every beast. The death-scurge was all over Egypt, from the king on his throne to the cattle in the fields; but we who had put the blood on our door-posts walked out without a death; not even a dog barked against us."

"How did you get out?" "We got out by the power of God." "Then why don't you go into your inheritance, past the giants and the fenced cities by the same power of God? What right have you to come to this stage of the journey and say, 'We can't get in'? You never worked before. Why do you say now, 'We have to fight these giants?'"

Where did you get this kind of philosophy, you folks who have been saved by the Blood of Jesus? What right have you this day to walk up against the flesh in your own strength? What right have I, fleshly as I might be? If any man despises the flesh, I am the man; I hate and loathe mine to-day, but bless God, I don't have to fight it. I have One Who undertakes and Who gives me the victory. Hear me. I don't have to fight, it is mine to "let go and let God." I am determined to let God do for me what He began to do in the beginning, when He brought me out of Egypt.

There is a life of victory, by trusting Jesus Christ and His power alone. By what authority, by what

right, by what argument, by what reasoning, could these ten men turn to this multitude and say: "*We cannot take our inheritance!*" Think of their doing this when their mighty God had delivered them from Egypt!

Let us turn again to these ten men and ask, "By what power of hydraulics did you turn back the waves and march through the sea on dry ground? What wind could you cause to blow and push back the Red Sea, and let six hundred thousand men through besides women and children? How could you get through in such an emergency as that? You didn't work it out, did you? Did you get your pails and go to bailing out the Red Sea? It was an obstacle you faced, a real obstacle, and you had no trust in yourselves, but you cried, and howled, and murmured, and complained, and Moses said: 'Stand still' and do what? 'And see the salvation of God. Stand still, believe God, and watch for His salvation.'

"Every man of you knows that the waves rolled back and made a wall, and you went across; and when the army of your great enemy Pharaoh came up behind it was drowned in the depths of the sea. Did you drown them? Did you let down the waves? Was it by any work of yours that this was done?"

All that multitude that were marching would have had to answer: "We did nothing. It was from first to last the work of the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob; and because of His promise to us and to our children. It was God's power in agreement with God's promise, that did the work."

God is looking for a Church and for a people in

this day who will say before God: "Away, away, away with the common earth-processes that we have now, of calling on the world to come and help us to do things! Let us believe our God, that it shall be even as He said to us in the beginning."

God is looking for a people who can believe Him, and who will demonstrate before the world that it pays to pray and to touch God, and that He will undertake. God has a way where we have no way; and when we get through, we cannot look at the thing that has been done and say, "*We did it*," but we turn around and praise God.

After Pharaoh's host had been drowned, the people held a great jubilee. They grabbed their trombones, and their old timbrels and tambourines, and bass drums, and bass viols, and some of them took dough-pans like those we pass around for the offering, that they had to carry their things in. They grabbed everything that could make a noise, and there on the shore of the Red Sea they danced and sang and shouted, and I imagine there was a good deal of emotion going around. I think you would have said: "The whole crowd is as crazy as a loon."

What were they shouting about? Because they, in their mighty power had closed the waters over their dread enemy, the army of Pharaoh? No, sir, they were shouting the praises of God, "Then sang Moses and the Children of Israel this song unto Jehovah, and spake, saying: I will sing unto Jehovah, for He hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the Sea. Jehovah is a man of

war: Jehovah is His name. Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath He cast into the Sea: his chosen captains are sunk in the Red Sea. The deeps cover them: they went into the depths like a stone. With the blast of thy nostrils the waters were piled up. The floods stood upright as a heap; the enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my desire shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them. Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters. Who is like unto thee, O Jehovah, among the gods, who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Thou in Thy loving-kindness hast led the people that Thou hast redeemed: Thou hast guided them in Thy strength to Thy holy habitation."

The world is looking for a class of people to-day who "before the battle lines are spread" can shout about what their God can do. Men are going into all kinds of "isms" because the church is praising man for his achievements instead of praising God.

The old-fashioned revival meeting had, as its distinguishing mark, the praise of the power of Jesus Christ; and now one of the marks of nearly all of our church work is the praise of men. But God once in a while makes an opportunity for Himself where He can show what He can do, and get the praise. We are living in the day of materialism and naturalism and man has taken the praise, but God is pleading: "*Trust Me and see what I will do.* Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse and prove me now

herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts; if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room to receive it."

Caleb came to Joshua and said: "Joshua, I am ready for my inheritance. God has promised it and I'm going to have it; and I'm going to have it according to the original contract. You remember what God said to me in the beginning, don't you?"

Then Caleb went on to say: "I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me, as my strength was then, even so is my strength now; for war, both to go out and to come in. Now therefore give me this mountain whereof the Lord spake in that day."

Do you know my heart leaped for joy when I read that. I wanted to get hold of Caleb and give him a hug, and hold a regular old-fashioned time of shouting. I tell you he is a wonder! He had gone through the wilderness with that crowd of unbelievers, with his faith firmly resting in the promise God had made forty years before; and now he straightens his shoulders and says: "I am as strong as ever I was. This mountain has the Anakim (giants) in it, and the fenced cities are around there. Now God will give me the greatest task of my life. Now therefore I pray thee give me this mountain."

Shall we not say, "Lord, give us a mountain!" Why did not Caleb say: "Well, I'm getting old, and I have a good many children; and I ought to be settling down; and I think I should like a little home near Paradise Valley, where the vines grow plentifully, and the grapes are abundant, and there are no wolves around,

and no giants. Now, Lord, I trusted you in the early days, won't you put me on the retired list and let me have ease and comfort in my old days, and give me a little vine-covered cottage?"

Oh, I like an old fellow like Caleb, who says: "My God, I want that mountain." What did he want it for? "If the Lord is with me," he said, "I will drive out the giants, even as God has promised." Thank God for such a spirit as that!

I met an old man at Ocean Grove, eighty-one years of age, who sat on the platform, and no man was as great an encouragement to me as that old fellow. He would get hold of my hand and feel my face, and say: "You are young, Paul, you are young, and have plenty of vigor; just appreciate it."

One morning before I left, he took hold of both my hands and looking up into my face he said: "Paul, can you believe it, in the night-time I feel as if I am young again, and find myself preaching: Oh, how I wish I were young again!" How I love a spirit like that. Let us say, "O God, don't make it easy for me, but give me the mountain, give me the big task, and get behind me Yourself to do it, and show the world through me what God can do with a yielded life."

XVII

THE MAN ON THE WATCH-TOWER

"I will stand upon my watch and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reprovèd. And the Lord answered me, and said: Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come and not tarry."

—*Habakkuk 2: 1-4.*

Doctor Scofield has pointed out that many have the Scripture "he may run that readeth" twisted around and made to say that "he that runneth may read." In other words, the emphasis might be put in this way: that it is written in such large letters that a man on his journey in a hurry, going somewhere, might read it as he ran by. But that is not God's thought. God never asked a man in the world to run until he had read. God never asked a man to go until He told him what to go for. God gives him the vision first, and then you cannot see him for dust, going because he has the vision. He that reads what God has written will run, and run fast. Others might say: "You must not go because you might get out there and the cannibals might eat you." "But," the man who has heard the call says: "I cannot see cannibals, I can only see the vision, I'm going, and I'm on my way."

"That he that readeth may run." Without a vision the people perish. You may have plans and methods, ways and means, machinery and committees, lots of information about people, but until the people of God pray, and the Holy Spirit writes the vision on the heart, the young men and women will never go. You may tell them about the dense darkness of non-Christian lands; and the horrible pits that Satan has dug for those who sit in the shadow of death; but that will not take them. Only God's vision can do the work; and once a man has had that vision, men may come around him as thick as bees around the honeycomb to turn him aside, but his vision sticks like the queen of the bees, calling within his heart. You may beat the tin-pans and try to drown the queen's voice of vision, but the vision that has flashed upon his heart burns and burns and burns, until in the night hours he cries to God, "Loose me, loose me, and let me go!" God gives the vision first, and then he that sees it runs, and men cannot stop him.

When you see how positively glorious and sure and mighty the work of Jesus Christ is in the human soul; it sings in your heart, and reproves you for not "passing out the bread" to the multitudes, and letting God do His work to others by means of His message through you.

The Lord said to His prophet: "Write the vision and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time." For fear you may think it is a "time," a "somewhat," a "something," God has shown very clearly by His Word that it is a *Some One*, and that

that Some One is His glorious and blessed Son. In the tenth chapter of Hebrews we have these words: "Yet a little while and He that shall come will come and will not tarry," these words being taken from this very chapter. The writer of the Hebrews goes on to quote: "Now the just shall live by faith"; faith in this coming glorious consummation and vision; "but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."

Every man or woman that was ever called to the mission-field God has allowed to be tied. He has allowed circumstances to come after they have seen their vision, to tie both hands and feet; and the devil says to them: "There you are!" God *let* them be tested to find out whether they will allow anything to tie them up when He has spoken, and when they have seen the vision. The man who breaks the withes and says: "The just shall live by faith," I will *not* be tied, that is the man who will go, and God will go with him.

God is looking for men and women to-day who will not take *No* for an answer when they have caught the vision. The Boards are not looking for men and women who say to them: "What will you do for me?" but who are saying, "In the name of Jesus, I must go; and if you don't send me I will go anyhow." These are the men and women who *will* go, and will not allow anything to hinder them. Thank God if He has given to you this mighty vision of evangelism. There are other men that may bring up the rear, and establish some other things, but you who read this vision are called to be the "light horse

cavalry" of God's consecrated host. You cannot wait for the equipment of the regular army, but by prayer, by holy daring, and by real sacrifice, and the power of the blessed Spirit you will go where other men dare not go.

If we wait for the multitude of Christians to come up to this vision we shall wait forever, and the work will never be done. Therefore God is calling for a crowd of young men and women who are willing to put their lives in His hands, and His fire in their souls, and go forward bearing the torch across the boundary lines into the darkest places of the earth, further than it has ever been carried, saying, like a great missionary pioneer: "Now let me burn out for God!" and thus bring back the King.

There are some who move in great caravans and bring up civilization from behind. We who are in this country know something of the hardy men, who in the early days planted this prairie land—the old rail-splitters who came in and found no tillable land, but tall trees; they grubbed them out, they built their little cabins with the smoke going up at the evening time in the timber clearing. Those little cabins arose here and there and yonder until the crowd could follow behind. Thank God for the little mission cabins, out yonder in the forests of sin, that were planted there by our devoted pioneers; from which the smoke of incense and prayer goes up to God. These pioneers have made the clearing, and they say to you to-day: "Come on! Help us to carry this glorious News a little further! We are sometimes very tired. We have slept in the malarial swamps, and our strength

is almost gone. Come, brothers, come and take up the message, do not let us stop here!" They are begging us to go a little further. Let those who are faint of heart go in where it is a little bit easier; but you, who are of the rough brigade of pioneers are called with a clarion call to carry the News further. Do not ask: "Which is the way?" for we have a God who can make a way when there is no way.

I remember in the early days, when my father was appointed missionary to Wyoming, it became my privilege to go with him on one of his journeys. We had gone on and on, and father had pressed a hundred and seventy-five miles farther than any missionary had ever gone before. I have seen him standing in the back of our little wagon preaching to the Indians, and to those lawless cow-punchers. Some of those came out of fine families; the majority of them were educated men, many of them were out there because they had to run for their lives. But they recognized the Gospel when they heard it, and, thank God, many of them were saved. I remember father preaching to raw heathen Indians; and never shall I forget the conversion of one of the chief's sons. When he came to tell his father the next day—my father went with him for the palaver—he told, with the tears running down his cheeks, how something had been working on his heart ever since he was eighteen years of age. God had picked him out and prepared him, and my father had the joy of leading him to Jesus. It was so easy.

When my father came back from the Orient, after making a tour of six months over the fields of heathen-

ism, he came back broken-hearted. There was so much machinery, and so many institutions, and so many men studying in them as godless as the university crowd in our time; and my father said: "Is this what the sacrificial money has gone for? That they might simply *study* Christianity?" It is not to be *studied*, thank God, it is to be *received* by faith, for the "just shall live by faith."

This is no booky affair, the Book is to eat, *it is to eat*, and to take by faith. I remember how my father, that glorious man of God, stood and looked at me, and said: "Son, remember when I am gone, that I protested this thing to the last, that the *world should have the Gospel preached to it*, not educated into it; and remember that you saw raw heathen Indians, inside of a few days from the time that they first heard the Gospel, accept it and admit the Lord Jesus into their hearts. They did not have to be educated first."

Did they go and *study* it for a year, and *cultivate* it for a couple of years? No, thank God, the vision is far better than that.

When God sent Paul to Macedonia, He found a little crowd by the river, and, in no time, Lydia's heart was opened and filled so that she said: "Now, if you will count me worthy, come in and I will make a home for the crowd of you." And a Church was established right away. That is the preaching of this glorious Gospel of evangelism.

One day while father and I were out in the wagon, about six in the evening, when the sun was going down after a dark and stormy day, we had a break-

down. There had been a terrific storm, and when the wind blows in Wyoming there is no powder-puff in it, it is all hurricane. Somebody asked: "Where is the wind when it is not blowing?" and he received the answer, "In Wyoming." One fellow asked, "Does it always blow this way up here?" And the answer was, "No, it sometimes turns and blows the other way."

One of these storms was on, and we came to a little stream, and father said: "We can get across all right." Old Crane, the old yellow nag, backed up a little, and father had to lay the whip on, but before we knew it we were in quicksand, for the horses hadn't gone through the stream quick enough, and we began to sink. Father said, "Jump: and run out the tug!" I did so, and when I got to the shore, I saw we could not get our wagon across unless I ran back. So I got a rope and tied it on the wheels. Then the horses began to plunge and kick. They broke the tongue, and then broke clear loose; but the rope held that we had tied and was fastened at the other end to a stump on the shore. There we were, with two horses and the wagon mired. I said: "Dad, what are you going to do?" I was ready to quit and go home; but there was no train to go on. Maybe some of you will get to that place in your experience, but, thank God, there won't be any train to go on. I hope you will get out so far that you won't have any way to get back, but be obliged to depend on God.

Father said: "It is dark, son, and we shall have to get some baling-wire before morning." So we started out, the rope was not sufficient to tie things

up and we *must* get some baling-wire. I took one horse and father took the other. I took one gun and he took the other. The gun is the thing in that country that you say "How do ye do" with. If you are a little distance away, you fire your gun, and the other fellow shoots his gun and says, "How do *you* do," over where he is; and you keep on shooting until you get together.

After I had gone two or three miles, and had been riding what I thought was about four hundred hours in the dark, I let the gun fly off, but there was no one to hear the gun-shot, but I kept on, and it was awfully dark, and a long way past my bed-time. Finally I saw a little light in the dark. It was a night-lamp set out on the window for somebody, although the folks were fast asleep. I rode up and hammered on the door, and five or six hounds set up a howl. After a while a sleepy-looking individual came to the door and said: "How are you, young man? What do you want? What did you wake me up for? Want something to eat?" "No, sir." "What do you want, want money?" "No, sir." "What in the world do you want? Want a place to sleep?" "No, sir, I don't want a place to sleep." "Want a place to put your horse?" "No, sir." "Then you must be crazy! Why don't you say what you want, in a hurry, if you want something?" And I said: "You won't give me a chance. What I want is a piece of baling-wire." "Well, why didn't you get it without waking me up?" "Because I didn't know where it was." "Is that all you want? There it is at the back of the barn, help yourself."

I got the baling-wire and went back toward the wagon the best I could in the dark. Finally, I got close to the place and began to fire off the gun. I heard Dad's gun go off 'way out there somewhere, and we fired again and again until we came together. Dad said: "Did you find it?" "I got it, good old baling-wire." That doesn't mean much to you, but if you had been a pioneer with the tongue of your wagon broken and four spokes gone, you would be mighty glad of baling-wire, and wouldn't ask for a new buggy or wagon; you would just say: "Give me a little baling-wire, and we will get out."

Our God is not asking for a railroad system, or buggies, or new wagons. He just wants a little of your baling-wire—that is all, and then the Gospel will get out. Yes, sir, the men and the women who have the vision and the hardihood, thank God, are willing to go in the spirit of sacrifice. They don't ask for a large salary, or for luxuries; they simply say: "Give us enough to live and we will go and preach the Gospel."

Some of you before long will begin to say: "Well, Mr. Rader, whatever did you wake us up for, if this is all you wanted? You get me up, and beg like this, and kick in my front door, and pull me out of my Christian ease. Haven't I a perfect right to my luxuries?" God hasn't asked you for much, He only asks for baling-wire. We give hundreds of thousands for our luxuries and for Christian work in the homeland. Oh, spare a little baling-wire for the regions beyond! Think of what the Christian Church gives for missions in proportion to what they give for every-

thing else! May God give us a vision. And the man who gets the vision runs.

Here is the thing I want you to see. If God gives you a vision, and you go forward and don't pull back, just at the very hardest time, just at the crucial moment, the Lord Jesus will show up alongside of you, and will do a bigger thing than you ever expected Him to do and *at that hour*. That is the way grace works.

Jesus sent out His disciples, having made an appointment with them, in which He said: "I will meet you on the other side of the Lake." They started out in their little boat, and the first thing they knew a storm began to toss them hither and thither, and they were seasick, first riding on the top of the waves, and then down into the trough of the sea. Everything was gone, in the way of sails, and they were perfectly helpless. No doubt some one said: "I don't believe Jesus *is* the Saviour. Jesus has no power or He wouldn't let people be tossed about like this." But remember, in the darkest hour, at the right time, in the right place, just in the nick of time, He comes in and helps, and the work is done.

That is the vision, He is right there Himself. And so Jesus waited through the first hour, and Peter might have said to one of the boys next to him: "Well, fellows, I think this being a disciple is a rough kind of job." And then they may have said: "John, what are you purring for, like a pussy-cat, in the corner of this boat? What is the matter?" And John says: "Brethren, perfect love casteth out all fear." "But, John, don't you see the waves?" "Yes, but I see

Jesus." "Why, John, it is the fourth watch of the night, and He hasn't shown up yet. How can you see Jesus?" And one of the disciples turned around and said, "Oh, look, look, there is a ghost!" But John said quietly, "That is no ghost." Then Peter said: "I believe it is He. I might have known it was. 'Jesus! If it is You, bid me come to you on the water.'" And Jesus said: "Come ahead!" And Peter stepped on the thing that had been drowning him, and walked on the waves to Jesus.

Listen! There isn't a thing that Jesus ever asked you to step on that He hasn't stepped on first. He never asked you to go out against sin until He stepped on sin. He never asked you to go up against the devil until He had trampled on the devil. He never asked you to go up against death until He had conquered death. He has passed through every storm and tempest, and He never asks you to follow Him out in the dark until He has conquered the darkness. When the darkness can be felt, He will come, walking over the waters, and be with you. That is the vision, my friends. That is the God I ask you to volunteer for and to go out with, when He leads the way. This is the Jesus I ask you to follow. He doesn't say: "Go!" But He says, as He did to Peter, "Come." Why? Because He is already out there in the dark. He was ahead of Paul in Macedonia, crying, "Come over and help us!"

He says: "Go ye, but wait until you get One to go with." And they waited in Jerusalem until the blessed Holy Spirit, in all His fullness came into their hearts; and they did not go alone. Paul did not say:

"Now, Barnabas, I think that you and I had better be a committee of two to go out there"; but a crowd of men began to pray, and the Holy Spirit said: "Separate me Paul and Barnabas for the work to which I have called them"; and the Spirit went out with them, and went ahead of them, and went through with them.

Not only will He rescue you in the hour of danger, but He will become to you a thousand-fold more than to the men who were never cast upon the waves, Hallelujah! The men who dared to trust Him, and who dared to go forth, have met a Christ who is able to vanquish the mightiest foes. In the darkest hour He will be with you. In the longest watch He will come to you in power and wondrous comfort.

He allows us to get into the hard places that we might become the salvation of others; and He will allow you to get into a province in a heathen land, and shake that little province as a dog shakes a rat, while you lay hold upon God in prayer. He will loosen it all up in answer to your prayers. Maybe two or three will have to be sacrificed in martyrdom; but when it is all over, and the clouds have blown away, the way is open to the Gospel, and it goes in like wildfire.

"Thou hast commanded us to go,
 Oh, never let our hearts betray Thee;
 And Thou hast left an awful woe
 On all who lightly disobey Thee.
 Oh, let us feel and fear that woe,
 As we would guard our own salvation,
 And let us answer to that 'Go,'
 As witnesses in every nation.

"We all are debtors to our race;
God hold us bound to one another;
The gifts and blessings of His grace
Were given to thee to give thy brother.
We owe to every child of sin
One chance at least for hope of heaven;
Oh, by the love that brought us in,
Let help and hope to them be given."

THE END

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God's blessed man

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